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A loss of will: "Arminianism," nonsectarianism, and the erosion of American psychology's moral project, 1636--1890

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A LOSS OF WILL:
“ARMINIANISM,” NONSECTARIANISM, AND THE EROSION OF AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGY’S MORAL PROJECT, 1636-1890

VOLUME I OF II

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Psychology

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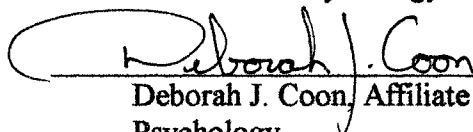
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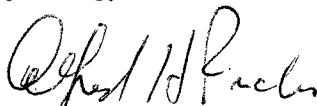
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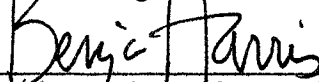
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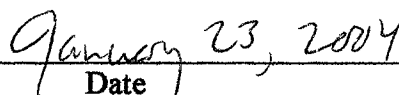
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DEDICATION

For Missy

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I would like to thank my dissertation committee for their assistance and encouragement during the process of writing and revising. Al Fuchs encouraged me early on in my investigations of Upham, generously giving me an unsolicited copy of Upham's Philosophical and Practical Treatise on the Will at the 2000 meeting of Cheiron at the University of Southern Maine. Ben Harris modeled professionalism and gave me articles for future research suggesting links to the twentieth century. Jack Mayer helped me to keep a finger on the pulse of contemporary psychology.

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year. The vast majority of this dissertation was written during the time of these fellowships.

Two particularly helpful online resources also facilitated this research. First is the “Making of America” database of nineteenth-century American literature maintained by the University of Michigan Digital Library (moa.umdlib.umich.edu). The database provided both scanned and picture versions of Upham’s (1869) Mental Philosophy. Christopher Green’s “Classics in the History of Psychology” website (psychclassics.yorku.ca) provided a scanned copy of William James’s (1890) Principles of Psychology. These tools were extremely helpful in searching and in excerpting longer quotes from the original texts. Neither website can guarantee the accuracy of their scanned versions, so all quotes have been checked (by me) against the originals. Any misquotations are solely my responsibility.

I thank the UNH psychology faculty and my peers in graduate school, particularly the members of “the cohort.” It was a privilege to be associated with such a talented faculty and a pleasure to be a part of such a supportive and fun-loving group of graduate students.

It is ironic that the people that have meant the most tend to get the least ink in acknowledgements sections such as this. This dissertation would not have been possible without the encouragement of the Hope Presbyterian Church community (Portsmouth, NH), and the unwavering support and affection of my family, to whom my debts are incalculable. Nor especially would it have been possible without the help of the Efficiency of whom Ames and Edwards wrote, who overcame my manifold inefficiencies in the process of writing this dissertation. This is, however, far from a claim to divine

inspiration. As the proverb has it, “When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise” (NASB). I am responsible for whatever lack of restraint is manifest in this dissertation, and for that I request the reader’s charity.

Finally, no one earthly companion has sacrificed more to make this dissertation possible than my loving wife, Missy Kosits. Dedicating this dissertation to her is a token of my love and gratitude.

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ABSTRACT

A LOSS OF WILL:

“ARMINIANISM,” NONSECTARIANISM, AND THE EROSION OF AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY’S MORAL PROJECT, 1626-1890

By

Russell D. Kosits

University of New Hampshire, May, 2004

The concept of “the will” dominated American moral psychology for nearly three centuries. To possess a will was, among other things, to be made in the image of God and to have moral responsibility. College textbooks, as tools of moral inculcation, conveyed this moral psychology from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century. During the first decades of the twentieth century, however, the topic of will was being increasingly de-emphasized in psychology textbooks. By the end of the 1930s, American psychology had “lost its will” entirely.

What explains this “loss of will” in American academic psychology? From a perspective internal to the discipline of psychology, one might argue that the shifting emphasis toward non-mentalistic, behavioral explanation (i.e., “behaviorism”) may have been to blame (or credit). Yet, a broader historical case can be made that long-standing intellectual trends or “impulses” in American colleges may have also played a significant role. This dissertation examines these trends as manifested in four leading textbooks, each arguably the best representative of its era: William Ames’s (1629) Marrow of Theology, Jonathan Edwards’ (1754) Freedom of the Will, Thomas C. Upham’s (1869) Mental Philosophy, and William James’s (1890) Principles of Psychology. This analysis

suggests that the concept of will was already in serious trouble (even “lost”) well before the twentieth century.

One of the trends that may have eventuated in the loss of will was the nonsectarian impulse that came to characterize American higher education beginning in the eighteenth century. Put baldly, sectarian formulations of the Christian story supported a robust psychology of will while nonsectarian formulations appear to have undergirded less robust moral psychologies.

Another factor is what I have called the “Arminian impulse” in American moral psychology. A radical shift took place in this textbook discourse during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a shift from a Calvinistic psychology of will which embraced (theological) determinism to an “Arminian” psychology of will which rejected determinism. This process of Arminianization was intended to strengthen and elevate the concept of will. Ironically, however, the effect was to weaken the concept, at least in mainstream academic American psychology.

INTRODUCTION

Explaining the “Loss of Will” in American Psychology

In the late 1800s, American psychology took a decidedly scientific turn.¹ The “New Psychology” of William James (1890/1981), John Dewey (1884), and others enthusiastically embraced the experimental and physiological emphases of European psychology while, with equal fervor, it eschewed the perceived theological obscurantism of the indigenous psychological tradition. Indeed, in the years preceding the establishment of the first American psychological laboratory, many thinkers insisted that such a methodological realignment would be essential if psychology in America were to escape its “medieval” bondage and make the “...transition from the orthodox to the scientific stand-point” (Hall, 1879, p. 100).

At century’s end, this methodological change was very nearly complete. Having established new laboratories, psychology departments, journals, and a professional organization, the New Psychology emerged victorious. Having escaped the alleged backwardness of the indigenous tradition, American psychologists looked back with pride. In the process, however, they also minimized their historical connectedness to the American tradition. James McKeen Cattell, for example, famously argued that “the history of psychology here prior to 1880 could be set forth briefly as the alleged chapter on snakes in a certain natural history of Iceland— ‘There are no snakes in Iceland’”

¹ The following material (pp. 1-4) was presented in somewhat different form at the 34th annual meeting of Cheiron: The International Society for the History of the Behavioral and Social Sciences, held in Eugene, Oregon in June 2002. The title of the paper was “A Loss of Will: Science, Virtue, and Freedom in American Psychology.”

(Cattell, 1898). Clearly, as Cattell saw it, there was no psychology in America before the New Psychology.

New Psychology² rhetoric therefore intimated complete independence from the indigenous tradition. Not surprisingly, then, as American psychologists began to write histories of their discipline in the early twentieth century (e.g., Boring, 1929; Murphy, 1929), they also attached very little importance to the indigenous tradition (Ash, 1983). This trend continued. Indeed, historians of American psychology have so often uncritically recapitulated New Psychology rhetoric that a “canonical” discontinuity story dominated twentieth century historical scholarship (Richards, 1995, p. 2). American psychology before William James was simply nonexistent. It followed that the New Psychology owed nothing to it, nor borrowed anything from it.

Fortunately, there has been movement away from this misrepresentation of the history of American psychology. In 1939, Jay Wharton Fay³ wrote a book entitled American Psychology Before William James. This book essentially served to refute Cattell’s assertion by cataloguing and briefly summarizing the psychological output of American thinkers before William James’s (1890/1981) ground-breaking textbook The Principles of Psychology. As such, it served mostly as a call to future scholarship, rather than a definitive treatment. Fay’s call was all but ignored for decades (cf. Roback, 1964). Recently, however, a growing number of works of scholarship in the “new” history of

² As a relatively recent discussion on the Cheiron LISTSERV indicates, a detailed study of the phrase “New Psychology” would undoubtedly reveal complex and multiple usages. In this paper, I use the term “New Psychology” in a way Dewey (1884) used it (at least on a connotative or implicit level), to capture the confident belief that emancipation from the methodological obscurantisms of the past and commitment to the experimentally- and physiologically-oriented European methodologies of the future would throw “great light upon psychical matters.” (p. 281)

³ Although Fay’s book was a call (of sorts) to future scholarship, Richards (1995) notes that “Even Fay...did not challenge the New Psychology’s revolutionary rhetoric, claiming it shared only the name ‘Psychology’ with what had gone before” (p. 2).

psychology (Furumoto, 1989) have examined, to varying extent, certain connections between the indigenous tradition and the New Psychology (e.g., Coon, 2000; Daston, 1982; Evans, 1984; Fuchs, 2000; Leary, 1987; O'Donnell, 1985; Pickren, 2000; Richards, 1995; Wetmore, 1991; Zenderland, 1998). In this dissertation, I hope to offer a further corrective to this "tradition of neglect" in the history of psychology (Fuchs, 2000).

To this end, this dissertation examines one particularly striking continuity between the New Psychology and the indigenous tradition: treatment of the topic of "the will" in American college textbooks. The will, or that part of the psyche typically associated with choices (particularly moral choices), had been a central concern of Christian theologians and philosophers since Augustine, and, by the beginning of the twentieth century, had been a particularly important theme in American psychological thought for more than 250 years (Fiering, 1981, Guelzo, 1989, Guelzo, 1999b). Given the New Psychology rhetoric of discontinuity, however, it is somewhat surprising to find that the will continued to receive attention in New Psychology textbooks until the 1930s. The great majority of New Psychology texts⁴ had chapters on the topic early in this period (i.e., 1890-1919); in the 1920s, fewer texts had such chapters, and finally in the 1930s the topic was dropped altogether.⁵

⁴ A fairly "random" sample of 35 introductory textbooks, taken from the University of New Hampshire Dimond Library, spanning from 1886 to 1964, reveals a clear pattern. The earliest of New Psychology college textbooks tended to continue the American mental philosophy tradition of containing a multi-chapter section dedicated to the topic of the will. In the years 1900 to 1919, 100% of the texts I sampled continued to have a chapter on the will (or, in one case, "Action"). In the period between 1920-1929 approximately 50% of the textbooks had chapters on the will. 15% of the texts during the 30s contained chapters on the will, and, after 1939, none of the books sampled contained chapters on the topic.

⁵ For further confirmation dating the "loss" in the 1930s see Gilbert (1970). This absence of interest in the will has largely continued in mainstream academic psychology. In a consideration of 10 randomly chosen current introductory psychology textbooks, none contained the terms "will," "volition," "choice," or "self-determination." The term "free will" was mentioned in three texts, but only in the context of obligatory discussion of the less-prestigious and dated humanistic or existential psychologies. There has been a revival of interest in will-related topics in the professional literature, however. PsychINFO, academic psychology's leading search engine, indicates that the term "volition" was added as a subject term in 1988,

Previous Scholarship on the Loss of Will

Scholars have noticed this loss of will, but have not attempted to articulate a sustained *explanation* for this loss, particularly in the context of American intellectual and religious history. Fiering (1981) contrasted the situation at seventeenth century Harvard, where “questions concerning the nature of the will probably engendered more debate...than any other topic in moral philosophy,” to the situation of the early 1980s, noticing that “...most of modern psychology seems to do quite nicely without any concept of the will at all. So profoundly has human psychology and psychological theory changed that talking about will is something like talking about bodily humors and the four elements in medical physiology” (p. 104). Yet, because Fiering’s work focuses on seventeenth century Harvard, he does not explore when or how this loss occurred.

James Deese (1990) has affirmed that “no topic has more completely disappeared from modern psychology than that of will....the will has disappeared from official psychology” (p. 295), and John Pahl (1992) asserts much the same thing:

Studying “the will” today is a bit like studying “the humors.” With a few notable exceptions, the idea of a discrete human will has been relegated to the intellectual dumpster, along with bloodletting by leeches, phrenology, the arc reflex, and any number of archaic conceptions of human action and motivation. (p. 163)

Still, neither Deese nor Pahl attempt to offer sustained explanations of how and why the topic was lost to modern psychology, although Deese does clearly see that the old

and the term “self-determination” which, PsychINFO indicates, is used for “free will,” was added in 1994. Searching for “volition” as a subject or a “key concept” produced 630 hits, while the term “self-determination” revealed 639 hits. By way of comparison, the term “attitudes” produced 46,197 hits (limiting the search from January 1994), and the less-well-established area “emotional states” (term added 1977), produced 6006 hits (since January 1994). Clearly, the revival is still a minor occurrence in the discipline. Nevertheless, an in-depth look at this “return of the will” vis-à-vis the older approach would be an interesting endeavor.

concept of volition had theological overtones, and did not seem to fit in the deterministic context of the new scientific psychology. Similarly, McReynolds (1990) noted that "...concern with the faculty of will has faded in contemporary psychology" (p. 144), although he did note an increasing emphasis on "the personal-control metaphor." Explaining this loss was not McReynolds' goal, either.

Gilbert's (1970) brief essay, "Whatever Happened to the Will in American Psychology" notes that "in contemporary textbooks of psychology, the discussion of concepts such as purpose, will, volition, and 'freedom of will,' has become disreputable. The topic of will virtually vanished from psychological textbooks in the 1930's" (p. 52). Gilbert seems disappointed by the loss of the "venerable concept" of will, and thought it "astounding...that thinking about the will for over 2500 years should have been fallacious." Still, this essay concerns itself more with twentieth century developments and the possibilities for restoring the concept to psychology, particularly through "personology." The essay does not attempt to offer a detailed explanation of *why* the concept may have been lost in the American context in the first place.

Allen Guelzo (1999a) has noted that there has been a "return of the will" in the last 20 years in American thinking. Although he does not explicitly state that there was a loss of will, the essay certainly implies it, and suggests that the rise of deterministic thinking in the nineteenth century and the failure of pragmatism in the twentieth were the leading causes of this loss. Nevertheless, the essay is not intended to offer a detailed explanation or description of this implied loss. It is therefore the purpose of this dissertation to describe and explain this "loss of will" in American psychology.

Explaining the Loss of Will: Two Theses

This dissertation offers two overlapping but distinguishable theses or explanations for the “loss of will” in American psychology. Each thesis centers on a particular “impulse” which operated in a particular sphere. The first thesis (which we might call a historical/sociological thesis) is that there was a “nonsectarian impulse” in American colleges which contributed to the loss of will. The second thesis (which we might call an intellectual/theological thesis) is that there was an “Arminian impulse” which increasingly came to characterize American psychologists’ notions of moral agency. This impulse, ironically, also contributed to the loss of will.

Loss?

First, however, I need to justify the use of the term “loss” to describe the gradual disappearance of the topic of will from introductory psychology textbooks (and their precursors). An issue that this dissertation addresses is psychology’s ability to consider human beings as moral agents. I assume that this is a worthwhile goal for psychology, although I do not assume that everyone will share this assumption. Yet, even for those who do not think that psychology should have anything to do with morality may (legitimately, I think) find their position actually *strengthened* from what follows.

An assertion that is harder to contest, I think, is that the loss of the concept of the will was indeed a loss of psychology’s ability to think of human beings as responsible moral subjects. From the days of Augustine, Western moral discourse centered on the notion of a faculty of will. Since at the time of the loss of will no alternative concept was offered, and since the burdens of responsibility and moral agency had previously rested upon the belief in the validity of the faculty, the loss of the faculty was, by consequence,

the loss of psychology's ability to consider moral agency in any coherent way. This is not to say that moral considerations did not seep into twentieth century psychology: a cursory knowledge of the history of American psychology contradicts that assertion. Neither does this mean that twentieth century psychology did not have moral implications. It simply means that psychology had lost its will to explicitly and intentionally consider human beings as moral agents.

There were (and are) good reasons to drop moral considerations out of psychology. Morality is an inherently sectarian or individualistic affair, and real-world science (i.e., science performed by individuals with diverse moral predilections) is incapable of determining which, if any, moral view is right. Nevertheless, the well-known problem with "morality-free" psychology is that the moral (and, relatedly, political) presuppositions of the psychologist (particularly those in the "softer" side of the discipline) inevitably seep into their scientific productions. Our selection of worthwhile subjects of study is perhaps the best example of this (e.g., sex roles, divorce, child abuse, prejudice, parenting styles, "homophobia," sexism, etc.). So, although there are good reasons to drop moral considerations from psychology, it turns out that in the end it is an impossible task. Yet, by prohibiting the explicit consideration of morality, psychology remains subject to moral "seepage" and is therefore bound to the (frankly) dishonest practice of presenting morality-driven "results" as if they were "objective" facts. One of the purposes of this introduction is to show how we ended up in such a conundrum, and, of course, how this process was related to the loss of will.

Personal Biases

Historical scholarship is, of course, subject to “moral ‘seepage’” as well, and I would be dishonest and inconsistent if I were to portray myself as a neutral reporter of the facts. I write with my own “sectarian” biases. This dissertation focuses on four major college “textbooks,” each representing a different era. One way to discuss bias is to report on my own feelings about each author. Working backward, I feel a great deal of empathy and respect for William James. As one trained in empirical psychology, I sympathize with James’s project to approach psychology scientifically, and further, as one with philosophical inclinations, I also appreciate James’s sensitivity to and mastery of philosophical issues. I also admire James’s existential courage. Yet, I am critical of the “Arminian” and nonsectarian impulses (concepts that I will explain below) that I find in James’s writing. Still, I admire James’s willingness to face the moral dilemma to which the Arminian impulse inevitably leads a would-be empirical psychologist.

Thomas Upham, the great American antebellum mental philosophy textbook writer, is my third author. I admire Upham’s orderly approach to psychology, his careful consideration of the great philosophers of the Enlightenment (particularly the Scots), and his apparently sincere piety. Still, as is the case with William James, I am critical of the Arminian and nonsectarian impulses that I find in Upham’s writing, which, I think, introduce a degree of inconsistency within his own thought. Even more, unlike William James, who seemed to sense (intellectually and existentially) the problems associated with the “Arminian” impulse, Upham seemed much less critical of this assumption. I do not fault him for this, however, for that may have been one of the chief biases of *his* era.

My second author is Jonathan Edwards, the eighteenth-century American Congregationalist and Puritan theologian, pastor, philosopher and interpreter of the “First Great Awakening.” As a committed member of a Presbyterian church community, I am sympathetic with Edwards’ Calvinism, and admire the way in which he carefully considered and engaged the intellectual currents of his day from that vantage point. As I have mentioned above, I am critical of the “Arminian impulse,” and there was perhaps no better critic of this impulse than Edwards. Because of this sympathy, I run the risk of appearing uncritically “pro-Edwards.” That is not my intention. This dissertation is written for a diverse audience (i.e., not written primarily for my faith community, although I do hope that some members of that community read it), and I have therefore attempted to avoid making “sectarian” arguments. The goal is to open discussion rather than close it. Therefore I attempt to make my case on rational grounds, all the while acknowledging (with William James) that “reason” is never neutral.

Still, I believe it is possible to make the case that one can be “objective” without being “neutral,” by being willing to consider both sides of the story, to hear things which contradict one’s own thesis, and to avoid uncritical and hagiographical veneration of one’s own subjects (Haskell, 1990). Although I am sympathetic with Edwards, I do also actually argue that Edwards *contributed* to the loss of will in American psychology by his (perhaps unwitting) implicit advocacy of the nonsectarian impulse. Further, while I certainly share a distrust of the “Arminian impulse” with Edwards, I also hope to show that one need not be a Calvinist to share this distrust. Indeed, I am inclined to think that *anyone* fully embracing both American psychology’s moral and scientific projects may actually be inclined to agree. But we shall see.

Finally, the dissertation begins with the British Puritan and author of the long-running (at Harvard and Yale) sectarian textbook The Marrow of Theology by William Ames. Aside from the fact that Ames wrote a “systematic theology” text (always of interest to Presbyterians), I find Ames interesting because of the unabashed sectarianism of his production. As such, Ames articulates a system of theology that today perhaps only a few could embrace, yet he still represents an era when sectarian pursuits were not considered antithetical to the pursuits of higher education. At the end of this dissertation I very briefly consider the question of whether the pluralistic academy may be able to achieve its ends by allowing a bit of “sectarianism” within its walls.

The “Nonsectarian Impulse”

Although religious sectarianism has not had much to do with *scientific* psychology in America, sectarianism was, actually, quite good for *moral* psychology.⁶ The dissertation begins with a close consideration of *the* sectarian theology textbook used at Harvard and Yale in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, respectively, William Ames’s Marrow of Theology. Although this text did not have a sustained examination of *exclusively* psychological considerations as we have come to expect today, it did make

⁶ The term “moral psychology” is given a twofold definition in the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy: “(1) the subfield of psychology that traces the development over time of moral reasoning and opinions in the lives of individuals (this subdiscipline includes the work of Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Carol Gilligan); (2) the part of philosophy where philosophy of mind and ethics overlap, which concerns all the psychological issues related to morality.” In this dissertation, the term “moral psychology” is used in a sense closer to the second definition given above, although neither definition fits perfectly. A definition of moral psychology that might better apply to the usage in this dissertation would be, “the systematic description and explanation of appropriate and inappropriate moral action, from a psychological vantage point, with a particular concern for moral agency.” The phrase “appropriate and inappropriate” is important in this regard. The moral psychology described in this dissertation always assumed (even in the case of William James—see section on “naming the object”) that there are right and wrong ways of acting. The more sectarian formulations tended to possess a clear view of what is morally right and they tended to be associated with correspondingly rich, detailed (although not necessarily sophisticated or scientifically accurate) moral psychologies. The phrase “with a particular concern for moral agency” deals with the fact that the moral psychologies considered in this dissertation all considered human beings as responsible moral *actors*. This stands in contrast to contemporary psychology, which tends to downplay agency.

heavy use of the concepts of will and intellect throughout its discussion of the nature of God and salvation. Indeed, it is a central contention of this dissertation that it was the specificity and particularity of Puritan theology (such as that contained in Ames's text) that sustained and explained the concept of the will in Puritan institutions (i.e., Harvard and Yale). As we shall see, the concept of will simply *made sense* in the context of Puritan theology. Other contexts, as we shall see, would be less friendly to the concept.

Nonsectarianism, on the other hand, turned out to be bad for moral psychology. As George Marsden (1994) has explained, nonsectarianism was the standard response of denominational colleges to meet the challenges of plurality in the eighteenth and particularly the nineteenth century. Throughout the time period studied in this dissertation, this "diversity" was largely Protestant. In order to avoid tensions between theological camps, colleges took a "lowest common denominator" approach to faith, stressing those aspects of religion which all parties could accept. The problem with this approach was that the very particularity and specificity that had sustained the coherence of the will concept was gradually eroded. Originally, the concept of will was sustained by specific assertions about God, about right and wrong, and about redemption. Nonsectarianism, or the desire to articulate a theology and morality that all could embrace, therefore led to a more watered-down version of Protestantism. In the chapters that follow, it should become clear that the deity of William Ames, for example, is a more carefully defined God than the deity of Thomas Upham's mental philosophy text. Yet compared to William James, *Upham* was the "sectarian." As the elements of the psychology of will were eroded, so too did the concept of will erode.

The “Arminian Impulse”

The term “Arminianism,” strictly speaking, refers to a sixteenth-century offshoot of Dutch Calvinism which, among other things, took issue with the Calvinist belief that faith in Christ could only take place at God’s initiative. In order to avoid the conclusion that God is evil, the decision to believe must ultimately be a matter of a person’s autonomous will. As we shall see, both Ames and Edwards were stalwart challengers to the Arminian doctrines. What I am calling the “Arminian impulse,” however, is a much broader concept than simply the ability of individuals to believe in Christ. William James (1890) concluded his discussion of the freedom of the will with an expression of this “Arminian impulse” (see chapter 12 for a full explication). James argued that a free act is a “strictly underived and original” act (p. 579). The Arminian impulse, then, is the desire to find some uncaused, underived “efficiency” or ability to do morally good things in the world. Indeed, the Arminian impulse questions the goodness (or badness) of actions which arise from any cause other than the autonomous and self-determined will itself. As James argued, a person may be “a child of the sunshine,” (p. 548) who does not need to exert effort to do good things. The inclinations of such a “child” are in good order, and incline toward good things. Yet, this child can really take no credit for his effortless goodness because he was born that way. The “hero and the neurotic subject,” on the other hand, is capable of the greatest virtue because they must find the resources for virtue within themselves *alone*. Only the hero who transcends nature (e.g., the normal cause and effect of desire and inclination) is truly virtuous.

This impulse is most easily contrasted with the sentiment expressed in Ames’s (1968) theology text, in which he argues that God is Efficiency itself, pure and

unencumbered “working power,” the only source of moral good in the world. Any good found in the creature is “derived,” i.e., finds its roots not in a self-determined will but in a gracious dispensation from Goodness. Further, since this Goodness works through secondary causes (e.g., desires, inclinations, upbringing), the goodness of the creature does not need oppose nature. Even a “child of the sunshine” can be morally virtuous in this world. Indeed, it is the child of the sunshine who is *most virtuous* because this child inclines toward nothing *but* the good.

What does this have to do with the loss of will in American psychology? First, the Arminian impulse implies a narrower definition of will. In the psychology of William Ames, the concept of “will” was quite broad. All of the effortless yet virtuous inclinations and desires of the child of the sunshine would be expressions of that child’s will. In the Arminian universe, however, will is only exercised when there is some sort of moral conflict and effortful choice to be made. Effortless activity may resemble the actions of the will, but is not will. The Arminian impulse might be inclined to say that the child of the sunshine therefore never actually needs to exercise the will, or, if he does, the activity of the will is simply consenting to what is already underway. So, while one approaches things of will (and therefore moral agency) in very broad terms, the other narrows the domain of will considerably. Perhaps the easiest way to illustrate this fact is found in Upham’s (1869) textbook Mental Philosophy. Upham famously challenged the traditional scholastic division of psychological faculties (i.e., intellect and will), arguing that the soul is composed of three distinct faculties, intellect, sensibilities and will. The first volume of Mental Philosophy focuses on intellect alone. The second volume (the volume that would have traditionally been dedicated to will) was divided between

sensibilities and will. About 65% of that volume was dedicated to the topic of sensibilities. The domain of the will was visibly shrinking.

Second, the Arminian impulse, by insisting that the moral “contribution” made by the will be entirely uncaused and “original” had two implications for the psychology of will in America. First, it implied that increasing the sphere of deterministic explanations for conscious experience would require a further shrinking of the volitional “sphere.” Secondly, it implied that the will (insofar as the will had been considered by “Arminians” to be a morally consequential *something*) is simply not susceptible to scientific analysis. So, if psychology is to be a science, psychology simply *cannot* study the Arminian will. As we shall see, William James (1890) did both of these things with the concept of will. He severely restricted the “domain” of free moral choice, and then declared that this domain was outside of the purview of psychology. And, so, in some sense, the “loss of will in American psychology” took place *before* the concept was dropped from psychology textbooks, and this loss was directly related to the Arminian impulse to define will as an uncaused and “original...contribution in the world” (II.579).

A More Detailed Examination of the Nonsectarian Impulse in American Colleges

Having briefly summarized the two “impulses” which, I believe, contributed to the “loss of will” in American psychology, I would like now to turn back to the first thesis: that the “nonsectarian impulse” tended to undermine moral psychology. This thesis deserves closer attention because it is an historical and sociological argument that contextualizes the moral use of textbooks in American colleges. It is, therefore, more of a “top down” thesis, i.e., based upon previous historical and sociological scholarship that

has to do with secularization of education in America. The second thesis (that the loss of will can be explained in part by the “Arminian impulse”), by contrast, is more of a “bottom up” thesis, i.e., one that seems (to me at least) to emerge from the texts themselves.

A Closer Look at American Psychology’s Enduring Moral Project

To begin, the history of the will in American psychology provides a unique opportunity to develop Graham Richards’s (1995) thesis that American psychology possesses an “enduring moral project.” Richards’ highly suggestive article demonstrates specific links between late-nineteenth century Protestant “mental philosophers” Noah Porter and James McCosh, and their respective protégés, George Trumbull Ladd and James Mark Baldwin, each of whom became leaders in the New Psychology. Specifically, he shows how certain elements of the moral agendas of Porter and McCosh were manifested in the “New” psychologies of their students.⁷ This dissertation expands upon Richards work not only by extending his basic insights, but also by historicizing the “Old” psychology, i.e., describing the evolution of psychological thought in America prior to Porter and McCosh, situating this thought in its rich religious and institutional context.

⁷ Nevertheless, Richards’ article, like the other scholarship exploring links between “Old” and “New” psychologies, does not attempt to historicize Porter or McCosh by taking into account the rich theological and philosophical tradition in which they stood. So, for example, while it is undoubtedly true that New Psychology textbooks were a “translation into more secular terms of the same ethical concerns which pervade mental and moral philosophy,” (Richards, 1995, p. 13), historicizing Porter, McCosh and the nineteenth century mental and moral philosophy tradition reveals their work *also* to have been a “translation into more secular terms” of the dogmatic theological tradition which preceded theirs. Indeed, I contend that the “translation” from the theological tradition of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century America, to the nonsectarian (but still broadly Protestant) mental and moral philosophy tradition beginning in the late eighteenth century was the decisive change, ultimately leading to the loss of will in American psychology. In other words, the loss of will began well before the advent of the New Psychology.

Further, the concept of ‘the will’ is an ideal starting point for a more detailed investigation of American psychology’s moral project. The will had always been a particularly crucial part of American psychology’s moral discourse: for three centuries, the concept was almost always discussed within a moral or theological context. The nineteenth century distinction between mental and moral philosophy is a good example of this. Mental or “intellectual” philosophy closely overlapped with epistemological issues and dealt with topics such as logic, intellect, and reasoning. Moral philosophy, on the other hand, focused upon the emotional side of the mind: passions, affections, and, most importantly, the will. By implication, will was by nature a “moral” faculty of mind. It will become clear that this linkage between will and morality was equally clear in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as well. It is not surprising, then, that when the New Psychologists entered into discussions of the will they understood that they were entering moral territory. When John Dewey (1884), for example, sang the praises of the New Psychology, he indicated that *because* the New Psychology focused on the will it was an “intensely ethical science.”

It is important to affirm and acknowledge that there are other possible approaches to studying the textbook treatment of the will in college textbooks used in American colleges. In this dissertation, I examine key texts as reflecting American historical developments. In view of the heavy European borrowings of the authors examined in this dissertation an alternative approach would be to look at these texts with a Europeanist eye, concentrating on the distinctively European flavor reflected in these texts. This approach would have taken me in a very different direction. Instead, I

attempt to tie the story of the loss of will in American psychology to the intellectual, religious and institutional history of America.

Richards argues that American psychology's moral project continues to this day, particularly in the sub-disciplines of developmental and social psychology.⁸ Although this contention is, I believe, true, one should not conclude that the loss of will was of little significance to American psychology. Given the centrality of the will to American moral psychology before and during the New Psychology, the loss of will in American psychology must have significantly altered this moral project, even if the developing fields of developmental and social psychology did inherit the moral mantle of American moral and mental philosophy. Although this is beyond the scope of this dissertation, one difference is that both developmental and social psychology seem to lack a concept of *agency*, but rather portray people as shaped by a variety of biological and social determinants.

It seems possible that William James and others tried so desperately to preserve will because they sensed the possibility and importance of its loss.⁹ I also attempt to assess the significance of the loss of will, the mechanisms leading to this loss, and, assuming that American psychology's moral project is here to stay, what these factors might suggest for the recovery of psychology's moral voice.

To speak of American psychology's enduring moral project is to raise certain questions regarding, at a very specific level, how the moral project of psychology was

⁸ Hunter (2000) makes a similar observation, arguing that developmental and educational psychology are crucial (although ultimately ineffective) contributors to the contemporary moral education of children.

⁹ See Coon (2000) for an analogous argument concerning James's reticence to let go of the notion of soul.

effected. And, on a more abstract and general level, what, precisely, constitutes the moral?

American Higher Education, Textbooks, and the Transmission of Moral Culture

American higher education has always sought the moral formation of its students. From seventeenth century Harvard's goal to train the student to "...consider the main End of his life and studies, to know God and Jesus Christ..." to Charles Eliot's late nineteenth century "secular" Harvard, which aimed to shape the character of its students through the formation of mental faculties, American colleges have taken the moral formation of students very seriously (Marsden, 1991, p. 41, 188).

On a general level, the college textbook (particularly the theological or philosophical text) was a key vehicle for the transmission of morality in American colleges, and represents an excellent and convenient record of the evolution of this moral discourse. Crucial to the topic at hand, moral discourse in textbooks always touched upon psychological considerations. From a moral perspective, the central "faculty of the soul" in these college texts was the will. In the seventeenth century, for example, William Ames (whose text Marrow of Theology was used at Harvard), claimed that will was at the center of God's redeeming activity: "the will is the proper and prime subject of...grace" (Ames, 1629/1968, p159). In the eighteenth century Jonathan Edwards (1754/1985) agreed, stating in his Freedom of the Will (used as a text at Yale), "All virtue and religion have their seat...in the will..." (p. 133). Hutcheson's Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy (1747/1969), a text used widely in American colleges during the late-eighteenth century, also agreed that morality was particularly linked to the will, while intellect was more properly dealt with in "Logicks and Metaphysicks" (p. 4).

The will continued to receive the attention of the ablest American minds of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century (Guelzo, 1989). Late in the nineteenth century, at Harvard, “preeminent among the psychological faculties to be cultivated was the individual will...” (Marsden, 1994, p. 188). Even into the twentieth century, “New Psychology” textbooks espousing evolutionary theory and experimental methodology continued to address the topic of will, placing the topic at (or near) the end of their textbooks, as the culminating topic (e.g., James, 1890).

So far, then, we have argued that American colleges had attempted to shape the character of their students, had used textbooks to that end, and had in the process relied heavily upon the concept of the faculty of the will. This leaves unanswered an abstract but important question: what, precisely, constitutes the morality involved in this project? I hope here to outline a more general answer to this question before explaining how these generalities apply to the specificities of the American situation.

Morawski (1992), agreeing with Graham Richards, argued that introductory psychology texts have “...served as moral guides, ‘fact’ books, and advice manuals on the self and others” (p. 162). Still, her analysis differs from Graham Richards’ (described above) in that it deals more closely with what precisely *constitutes* the moral in psychology textbooks. Drawing upon tools of textual analysis, Morawski finds morality in the “...complex social arrangements... between psychologist and readers, and between readers and everyone else...” (p. 161), particularly in the way textbooks construct the “subjectivities” of the readers. I agree that this construction of subjectivity is a crucial part of morality.

The emphasis on subjectivities does not, however, go far enough in answering the constitutive question concerning morality. Rounding out the pictures provided by Richards and Morawski, Hunter (2000) offers further insights into the constitution of morality by changing the question. Whereas Morawski's textual analysis looks at the way "authorial voice" aims at constructing the subjectivities of the reader, Hunter's sociological analysis looks at the requirements for the successful formation of character. In short, Hunter argues that the formation of character always takes place within "moral cultures." These cultures teach a particular (as opposed to vague or general) and sacred (although not necessarily religious) *content*, which clearly articulates a given "morality." Morality is not only "a complex body of prohibitions and warrants through which social life is ordered and sustained," but also includes an "underlying and implicit vision of reality" (p. 15). Character, which is the goal of moral instruction, is the "embodiment" of these ideals. To put the matter a bit differently, Hunter complements Morawski's formulation: character formation, i.e., the inculcation of Morawski's "subjectivities," also requires objectivities, i.e., specific "visions of reality" which explain these subjectivities.

Hunter is very careful to argue, however, that character is not a matter of individualistic attainment, but rather requires social embeddedness, or *community*. Because moral cultures are always social arrangements, they provide the crucial opportunities for praise or chastisement, which make their particular moral vision weighty. We might say, then, that character is always formed within moral cultures, which, in turn, always join content and community.

These combined insights provide a useful frame for understanding the nature of psychology's enduring moral project. Although subjectivities are a crucial part of moral

formation, so too are objectivities. Further, these two factors are always embodied in some community. When theologians, philosophers and psychologists wrote psychological discourse in textbooks (and when college educators *used* these texts), they articulated (to varying extent) morally binding visions of reality (or what I am calling “objectivities”) meant to transform not only individual subjectivities, but the subjectivities of entire, specific moral cultures. They were, in short, attempting to transmit moral culture. As Morawski said of New Psychology textbooks, they “engaged in the project of shaping what is humanly possible and desirable” (Morawski, 1992, p. 168).

Hunter’s approach, by stressing the sociological requirements of character formation, provides insights that may help to answer questions that a textual analysis of texts alone does not. Morawski admits that “it is difficult to assess the function of psychology textbooks” largely because little scholarship has been done on the topic. She ponders, “Have they made a difference to the discipline or to people’s lives, and if so, in what ways?” Later again Morawski says, “We know little about...how seriously [the texts] were taken by instructors or students...” The notion of moral culture helps to answer both questions. If we understand the moral goal of college textbooks as attempting to transmit moral culture, a full understanding of the impact of texts will take content *and* community into consideration. There must be a consistent social structure that reinforces the content within which textbook readers live and move and have their being. So, although the precise effect of texts cannot be known, we can investigate the extent to which moral discourse of textbooks was part of a larger community of moral

discourse. This can augment our sense of the vitality of the various moral cultures that will be assessed in this dissertation.

By focusing on college textbooks, however, I am focusing on the “content” of moral culture, and intentionally de-emphasizing the “community” aspect, i.e., the ways in which the moral ideals expressed in textbooks were institutionalized and enfolded within a given college community. But again, I do not want to ignore this important aspect of moral culture. There are two ways in which I plan to address the issue of moral community. First, existing scholarship provides a fairly clear picture of the evolution of academic communities in American colleges, as will be discussed in more detail in the body of this dissertation. The overall trend, from the close-knit and highly regulated model of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the more independent models of the nineteenth century (Bledstein, 1976), suggests that the communal aspects of character formation tended to change considerably.

The second way in which we can gain insight into the nature of moral community is, ironically, by considering what the texts themselves have to say about community. The pattern here is fairly clear. The seventeenth-century textbook that is analyzed (Ames’s Marrow of Theology) has a great deal to say about it. The late nineteenth-century textbook that is analyzed (James’s Principles of Psychology) has very little to say about it at all.

Answer to Pluralism, Challenge to Moral Psychology: The Development of a
Nonsectarian Moral Culture in American Colleges

The fact that communities became less paternalistic as the nineteenth century progressed does not mean that college educators had abandoned their moral goals.

Instead, a nonsectarian impulse developed in the United States in response to the realities of pluralism which conceived of moral community in increasingly broad terms. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, for example, most colleges wanted *all* evangelical Protestants to be part of the collegiate community. At the end of the nineteenth century, colleges were havens for *all Protestants*. The ever-widening pattern continued. Today, colleges desire *everyone* to be a part of the collegiate moral community, as evidenced by the contemporary stress on “diversity.” But this project necessarily was (and continues to be) incompatible with the specific and particular moral objects of any one particular sectarian community. In any given manifestation of this impulse, a moral object would need to be articulated which would be acceptable to the big group. As the group got bigger, the moral object got fuzzier. And, as I will argue below, the evolving and dissolving moral object, which had historically been an important part of the psychology of volition, weakened the psychology of will.

The task of shaping character in American college students has historically been complicated by another crucial characteristic of American higher education: its public nature. Even seventeenth century Puritan Harvard, although closely linked to the church, was actually created by the civil magistrate. Therefore Harvard sought to train leaders for both churchly and civil service, and had a board of trustees evenly divided between clergy and magistrate (Marsden, p. 39, 40). Given the rather homogeneous goals of church and state in seventeenth century Puritan New England, this dual emphasis did not create any serious crisis in the moral agenda of the college. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, the moral project of American colleges was complicated. What moral perspective should be transmitted? A Puritan one? Anglican? Methodist?

As I will argue below, the solution to this problem, which began to be articulated in the eighteenth century, marks the beginning of the loss of will in American psychology.

Pluralism is not a “problem” unique to the twenty-first century. Indeed, since colonial times, pluralistic realities have characterized the American experience. Nevertheless, at the very earliest stages of colonial development, there were significant departures from this pattern. For our purposes, a very significant departure from this pluralistic pattern was early- to mid-seventeenth-century Massachusetts Bay, and its college, Harvard. Harvard was an “isolated and strictly controlled environment,” (Marsden, 1994, p. 44) which offered an unabashedly sectarian curriculum. The quintessential expression of this sectarianism was the fact that William Ames’s textbook, The Marrow of Theology, still considered an excellent systematic expression of Puritan belief (Bremer, 1995, p. 22), was required reading.

As the seventeenth century closed, Puritan dominance in Massachusetts dissipated (Bremer, 1995), and denominational diversity grew across the colonies. Some strict Calvinists, like Cotton Mather, bemoaned this growing diversity. Believing that Harvard College was slipping away from orthodoxy, they supported the establishment of Yale College in 1701. Just twenty years later, Yale rector Timothy Cutler made the decision, unimaginably horrible to Calvinists, to convert to Anglicanism. Yale responded to the threat of theological disagreement by making strict subscription to the Westminster Standards requisite for all faculty members (Marsden, 1994, pp. 52-53). About the same time, other denominations were establishing their own colleges, and dealing with the problem of denominational difference in more irenic ways—often, for example, having members of other denominations serving on their boards of trustees (p. 57). In short,

American higher education could no longer assume the theological and denominational homogeneity of its constituents, and had to devise ways of dealing with this diversity.

In the eighteenth century we find the first leanings toward the solution to the problem of pluralism that would, by the mid-eighteenth century, dominate American higher education. This solution is well-summarized by the 1754 Advertisement for the new King's College (Columbia):

“...there is no Intention to impose on the Schollars the peculiar Tenets of any particular Sect of Christians; but to inculcate upon their tender Minds the great Principles of Christianity and Morality in which true Christians of each Denomination are generally agreed” (Snow, 1907, p. 56).

George Marsden (who is my leading source on the history of American colleges and universities) highlights this very passage as “the creed that in substance would be repeated at almost every such college for the next two centuries” (Marsden, 1994, p. 58). So, while the desire to avoid “the peculiar Tenets of any particular Sect of Christians” was worlds away from Yale, which (as noted above) was now requiring faculty to subscribe to a specific creed, other schools, such as the new colleges in Philadelphia and New York would lean toward the nonsectarian approach. In the 1760s, even the Presbyterian College of New Jersey would begin to move from the highly sectarian New Divinity of Jonathan Edwards' followers (Kuklick, 2001), and embrace a less sectarian approach to moral inculcation through the enlightened ministrations of its new president John Witherspoon.

Implementation of this nonsectarian program would require a new kind of textbook—one that would not, of course, rely on specific creeds or traditions of biblical

interpretation, but would rather utilize a method¹⁰ that would allow members of different denominations to agree upon the basic parameters of the moral life. Early on, this method would be found in the writings of the Scottish Enlightenment, an early expression of which was found in the widely adopted moral philosophy text of Francis Hutcheson, adopted at King's, Philadelphia, and Rhode Island in the eighteenth century (Snow, 1907). Witherspoon's Princeton lectures were also based heavily upon Hutcheson's method (Witherspoon, 1982). Hutcheson (1747/1969) argued that a knowledge of the self was a crucial starting point for moral inquiry, "We must...search accurately into the constitution of our nature, to see what sort of creatures we are; for what purposes nature has formed us; what character God our Creator requires us to maintain" (p. 2). Instead of taking our main cues from scripture, Hutcheson reasoned that because God had created human nature, we "must expect to find *in our structure and frame* some clear evidences, shewing the proper business of mankind..." (p. 3, emphasis mine). This movement from creed to the philosophical introspection of our own "structure and frame" would be widely adopted after the Revolutionary War, and, by 1830, would completely dominate textbooks utilized at American colleges (Marsden, 1994, p. 91).

The importance of the move to "nonsectarian" methods of moral reasoning is not a new discovery. Indeed, the theme is central in Marsden's (1994) The Soul of the American University. The novel application of this insight in this dissertation is that this eighteenth and nineteenth century decision on the part of American educators proved decisive for the trajectory of psychological thought in America that ultimately led to the loss of will at the hands of the New Psychology. Moral cultures seek to shape

¹⁰ This may be considered an early stage of the development of the "shared method" of the "psychological regime," articulated by Hunter (2000, p. 10).

subjectivities through the articulation of certain objectivities, embedded in particular communities. The nonsectarian impulse was to widen the moral community. This widening of the community necessarily altered the articulation of the moral object, which, in turn, altered the corresponding subjectivities. As I will argue below, one of these subjectivities was the will.

Puritan Particularity, Story, and the Sustenance of a Vital Moral Psychology of Will

I leave the full explication of the Puritan psychology of will to Part I, in which the theologically-centered psychology of William Ames is discussed in detail. At this point I simply hope to demonstrate that seventeenth century Harvard was able to sustain a coherent psychology of will because of a sectarianism that inculcated a particular subjectivity by marrying a particular objectivity to a particular community. These three elements of moral culture were glued together by the Puritan story.

Beginning with Puritan objectivities, we turn to the basic contours of the Puritan story, particularly with an eye on the ways in which this story sustained interest in the will. Using the Westminster Shorter Catechism¹¹ as a guide, the Puritan Story may be reduced to three essential elements: *Direction, Divinity, and Duty*.

The issue of “Direction” is taken up early in the catechism, immediately after asserting that the “chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” The catechism then asks, “What rule hath God given to *direct us* how we may glorify God and enjoy him?” (emphasis mine). The answer, consistent with Reformation theology in general, was that the Bible “...is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.”

¹¹ The Westminster Shorter Catechism, a concise 107-question summary of the Puritan faith, was presented to Parliament in 1647, and officially endorsed in New England in 1649 through the “Cambridge Platform” (Bremer, 1995).

Regarding “Divinity” (which was the Puritan word for “theology”) the Puritan story, like the Protestant, and even Christian story in general, was a story about God and creation, about fall and redemption, and about judgment and glory. The details of the story, however, were uniquely Calvinistic. Because of Adam’s fall, the catechism stated, human beings had lost the ability, the inclination- the *will* to “know, obey and submit” to God rightly. Yet, God had mercifully elected some to be delivered out of this “estate of sin and misery” through a “Redeemer....the Lord Jesus Christ.” A crucial part of this redemption was “effectual calling” (which Ames simply refers to as “calling”), whereby God renewed the stubborn and faithless wills of the elect through the Holy Ghost’s application of the preaching of the gospel to the lost soul. Reflecting the scholastic distinction of will and intellect, the catechism stated that “God’s Spirit” works by “enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills.” This process of effectual calling, which included the rebirth or regeneration of the wicked will, was a subject generating endless Puritan theological energy, resulting in seemingly innumerable pages of theological prose.

Finally, the Puritan story was about “Duty.” Question 39 asked, “What is the duty which God requireth of man?” The answer, “The duty which God requireth of man is obedience to his revealed will.” The catechism went on to say that this revealed will was “at first revealed to man” in “the moral law.” This moral law was then summarized in the Ten Commandments and the “first and greatest commandment,” which was “To love the Lord your God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.” The Puritan story therefore was more than doctrine and direction, but also contained an ethical code that shaped notions of right

behavior, and, more saliently, further dramatized the problem of will. This drama was found in the subjectively-appropriated tension between the uncompromising demands of the moral law, and the moral weakness of human beings due to the fall. That is, the difficulty that the Puritans experienced in obeying the Ten Commandments and in loving God and neighbor *was*, to great extent, the problem of will to the Puritan mind. Even for those whom God had effectually called, the Puritans insisted, “sin and misery” still impeded their progress as Christian pilgrims. In short, Puritan doctrine and ethics energized and sustained the topic of will as a subject of serious inquiry in the seventeenth century.

This Puritan story, which constituted a large part of the content of the moral culture at Harvard, did not, of course, stand alone for the individual to appropriate on his or her own. The catechism insisted that the benefits of redemption were to be appropriated in community, i.e., in partaking of the “ordinances” of God, which included the public hearing of the word of God and the public partaking of the sacraments. Further, the inculcation of this story was assured by a highly integrated Puritan society. Before arriving at college, children would have typically been catechized (with the same theology)¹² at home and at church. This highly regulated environment would have been maintained after moving to Harvard. A rigorous schedule of study and worship was devised, specifying times and days for particular classes, meals, prayers, and worship. All seven days of the week were planned in advance (Snow, 1907). All of this was performed under the close supervision of the college rector and tutors. Although we cannot be certain of the extent to which this schedule was implemented, the fact that such

¹² This is a unique aspect of seventeenth century Harvard: the moral culture of this college was, arguably, a microcosm of the broader moral culture. The more difficult task of the eighteenth century was to create a moral culture amenable to an increasingly diverse group of Protestants.

schedules were devised is a strong picture of the type of moral culture envisioned by the college leadership.

The centrality of story in binding together subjectivity, objectivity and community, which, in turn, sustained the psychology of will, suggests several questions. What would happen to the psychology of will when the story which had traditionally sustained that psychology is lost? Is the notion of will transferable to other mythologies? If so, which?

Illustration of the Nonsectarian Thesis: Puritan Particularity, Nonsectarianism, and the Fading Object of Volition¹³

Having gained some conception of the Puritan story, and its correlative subjectivities, objectivities, and communal substructure, it is perhaps appropriate to put some flesh upon these theoretical bones by illustrating the way in which the “objectivities” of moral culture evolved during the period in question by focusing on the four texts that are analyzed in this dissertation. To do this will require a bit of background on the relation of subject and object in Western psychology.

Historically, the psychology of will had two basic and fundamental elements. First, on a very general level, the psychology of will, like all Western introspective psychology, was concerned with the relation between subject and object. One of the most striking features of a James, or a Locke, or an Edwards, or an Upham is how often they use the word “object” in the context of their psychological theorizing. For example, performing a word search on James’s Principles, the word “object” appears

¹³ The following material (pp. 30-38) was presented in somewhat different form at the 35th annual meeting of Cheiron: The International Society for the History of the Behavioral and Social Sciences, held in Durham, NH in June 2003. The title of the paper was “Naming the Object: The Struggle for a Nonsectarian Moral Psychology in American Colleges, 1754-1890.”

approximately 900 times. The only words that appear more frequently are those related to thought (thought, thoughts, think: well over 1000), those related to feeling (feeling, feel, feelings: well over 1000), and the word “mind” (which also appears over 1000 times).

A fundamental belief of the introspective psychological tradition therefore seems to have been that the human mind is ever beholding, conceiving, evaluating, remembering, perceiving, thinking about *or willing*...some object. Thomas Upham (1869), the leading antebellum American mental philosopher, spoke for the whole tradition when he simply stated (repeating Thomas Reid), “every act of the will must have an object” (Upham, 1869, p. 487).

The second characteristic of the psychology of will as it was manifested in American history was that the most salient objects of will were typically *moral* objects. It is true that psychologists of will did discuss more mundane volitions (and objects), such as walking (e.g., Edwards, 1754), to make theoretical points. Yet the topic of “the will” was seen as a psychological foundation for human responsibility, and was sustained by shared cultural standards of right and wrong. Psychologists of volition therefore regularly drew upon culturally accepted moral objects of volition in constructing their models of the mind.

The fact that, historically speaking, the psychology of will seemed to require shared commitments to certain moral objects suggests another question. What would happen to the psychology of will when would-be psychologists (and the communities they represent) have difficulty specifying or agreeing upon particular moral objects? If it is not clear what we *ought* to will, does it make sense to speak of “will” at all? I will

argue that it did indeed become more difficult to “name” moral objects in the eighteenth and nineteenth century American academy, and the psychology of volition suffered as a consequence.

College Texts as Methodological Means to Nonsectarian Ends. To illustrate these assertions, I will briefly refer to the four textbooks which constitute the subject matter of this dissertation. Each of these texts was arguably the leading “psychology” text of its era. For background, I will begin with William Ames’s (1629/1968) Marrow of Theology, a heavily sectarian textbook used in sectarian colleges (seventeenth century Harvard and eighteenth century Yale) which clearly “named the object” of volition. The seeds of the difficulty in naming the object are seen in Jonathan Edwards’ (1754) still-sectarian but also “Enlightened” Freedom of the Will. The difficulties are magnified in Thomas Upham’s (1869) best-selling antebellum textbook Mental Philosophy, and, most clearly, in James’s (1890) Principles of Psychology. My goal here is to offer examples of the evolving (and dissolving) object of volition.

The Efficient Object of William Ames’s Marrow of Theology. For the purposes of background, I would like to begin this exploration of “naming the object” with what Marsden has called “*the* textbook on theology at seventeenth-century Harvard” the Marrow of Theology by William Ames. Briefly, Ames’s text was devoted to particular, sectarian theological concerns, and also clearly named the object of volition.

Ames (1968) defined theology as “the doctrine or teaching of living to God” (I.i.1), and argued that this “living to God” can be further divided into two parts, faith and observance. Faith, which Ames understood as an act of will, must, he argued, have an object. And, not surprisingly, Ames argued that God is the object of faith. Ames spends

considerable time not only naming this object, but describing it in detail. For all of God's "objective" attributes, Ames saw a correspondingly appropriate "subjectivity". For example, Ames spent a great deal of time considering God's "efficiency," or his unencumbered and unhindered power to achieve whatever he desires. God is "omnipotence in action." In view of this intimidating and awesome object, a consideration of God's efficiency made Ames (1968) conclude that God is "the proper and adequate object of faith" (I.vii.54).

In sum, then, William Ames's text, used in the context of a particular sectarian moral community, clearly named the moral object of volition. The will, although not a term of precise psychological signification, was the subjectivity corresponding to the awesome objectivity of the efficient Puritan God.

A Sectarian Object in Jonathan Edwards' Nonsectarian Freedom of the Will.

Jonathan Edwards, who wrote the leading American book on the topic of the will in the latter half of the eighteenth century, had studied William Ames at college (his copy of the Marrow is available for perusal at Yale). He was an ardent defender of a variation of Ames's Puritan theology and wrote his book as a refutation of a theological position that Ames despised, Arminianism. In 1754, he published his Freedom of the Will, which was subsequently used as a textbook at Calvinist colleges such as Yale and Dartmouth, and influenced nearly *all* American works on the topic of the will for the next 100 years.

While Ames's Marrow of Theology was a positive statement of Puritan theology, Edwards' text was more negative...a refutation of a particular theological error. But there was another, even more relevant difference between Ames's and Edwards' books. The style of Edwards' text was decidedly more secular (Guelzo, 1989). Whereas Ames's

Marrow is peppered with Scriptural proof texts, Edwards, in the spirit of the Enlightenment, took a strongly philosophical and rational approach to debunking Arminian psychology. As traditional treatises on the will had been exegetical, this was, arguably, a significant step in the secularization process. Relatedly, while Ames's text was "preaching to the choir," i.e., it was used primarily by Puritans for the training of Puritan clergy and professionals, Edwards' text was directed to a broader audience. Edwards' argument therefore intimated that the truth about the will was primarily a matter of reason and common sense rather than a precious truth to be preserved by a particular community of believers.

There can be no doubt, however, that Edwards used these "secular" means to *sectarian* ends. Edwards openly admitted to being a Calvinist, and, when he named the sectarian moral object, he made recourse to Scripture rather than reason in doing so. Edwards argued that human beings should possess a "sincere willingness to love Christ and choose him as his chief good," and that "these holy dispositions and exercises..." should be "the direct object of the will" (pp. 313-314).

In sum, Edwards' text was a transitional text built on the premise that a nonsectarian method could be used to achieve sectarian ends. When it came to "naming the object," however, Edwards still fell back on traditionally sectarian methods. His nonsectarian and enlightened method was insufficient to his sectarian ends.

The Diffused Object in Thomas Upham's Mental Philosophy. Thomas Upham's theological training was in the shadow of Jonathan Edwards. Edwardsean theology strongly influenced the founding of Andover Theological Seminary, where Upham attended 1818-1821 (Salter, p. 4), some sixty years after Edwards' death. Five years after

graduating, Upham published the first edition of what would become his best selling textbook Mental Philosophy, which, according to Salter (1986), "...went through an astounding fifty-seven editions" between 1826 to 1899 (p. 12).

Upham's goals, reflective of the Scottish Enlightenment, were broader than those of Ames's and Edwards'. His goal was to provide a complete view of the human mind, based not upon sectarian dogma but upon the Baconian method of induction. Nevertheless, reflecting his theological heritage, Upham (1869) argued that God was the greatest moral object. Among the variety of intellectual and moral objects is the most "pleasing and even enrapturing" object that one can contemplate, "the Supreme Being" (II.74). Two points are relevant here.

First, Upham tried to show that humans are so designed (for God-centeredness) by making an argument from analogy. Upham argued that God had designed the mind with an inclination to love family, country, and humanity, among other things. If it is the case that we have love implanted toward these comparably lower entities, Upham thought, then surely we must also love the infinitely great being. The fact that Upham presupposes quite a bit in this argument is, I think, evident. Not surprisingly, Upham, like Edwards, also quoted the Bible to back up his claim that love of God is naturally implanted in the human heart. Once again, when it came to naming the moral object of volition, the neutral methods of the Enlightenment came up short, and Upham was forced to draw upon considerations derived from other sources.

Second, reflecting the nonsectarian nature of the mental philosophy textbook, it is not surprising that the God of Upham's mental philosophy was generally a less specific, less sectarian God. As mentioned above, Upham (1869) speaks of God in Mental

Philosophy most often as a wise designer of the human mind... and much less emphatically about the specific attributes of the divine nature. Upham's God was also more palatable to a broader audience because he assured his readers that God would *never* violate their free wills (II.248).

In sum, then, Upham named a more palatable, more diffused, less sectarian moral object of will, but still needed to go beyond his Baconian method to do so.

The Disappearing Object in William James's Principles of Psychology. William James, like Thomas Upham, can be considered not only an American psychologist, but also an American religious figure. As Louis Menand (2001) has recently stated, James "worked most of his life to defend simultaneously held worldviews—modern science and religious faith" (p. 75). Menand is not, of course, alone in this opinion. As such James deserves to be considered (and has been considered) in the context of American religious and institutional history.

Living in an age in which traditional Protestantism was crumbling among elites, one of the ways that James tried, perhaps unwittingly, to maintain vestiges of the old religious order was by placing a strong emphasis on the will in his Principles of Psychology.

We can approach the way James (1890) "named the object" by examining his distinction between a healthy and obstructed will. In the healthy will, "the vision should be right and...action should obey its lead" (II.546). In an "obstructed will," the person sees the good, but does otherwise. He thought that an "inward hollowness" follows "habitually seeing the better only to do the worse" (II.547).

Yet James was not as clear about what “the better” was, as compared to Upham or Edwards, for example. James frequently made a distinction between lower, bodily motives and ideal motives, clearly preferring the latter to the former. He thought that “objects of passion, appetite, or emotion—objects of instinctive reaction...” possessed the greatest power to move the will, while the ideal objects possessed relatively little power to move the will, particularly because these objects are “foreign to the instinctive history of the race” (II.536). Given this biological and evolutionary conundrum, James argued that “*the essential achievement of the will...*” was to “...ATTEND to a difficult OBJECT and hold it fast before the mind” (II.561). By doing so, a human being could ensure that the morally right thing was done. Yet James avoided getting too specific about what the morally right thing to do was.

Although James hesitated to name the moral object of volition, he certainly did believe in the importance of these objects. In his chapter on the perception of reality (which deals with the topic of belief), James quoted at length from an article he had originally published in The Princeton Review in July of 1882. In the article James argued that human beings possess certain subjectivities that *require* commensurate objectivities. A philosophy of life worthy of adoption is one which provides an “Object...to press against” (II.312-313), i.e., an object that corresponds to our subjective experiences.

For James, successful theoretical systems make predications of the universe which comport with the “powers” and sentiments which all humans possess. Primitive Christianity was successful because it was an “...announcement that God recognizes those weak and tender impulses which paganism had so rudely overlooked...” (II.314). So too the Renaissance affirmed our aesthetic sensibilities, the Reformation our

experiences of “faith and self-despair,” etc. James thought that no existing system could fully explain all of our “powers” or sensibilities. Nevertheless, in order to explain the variety of human subjectivity, James took a stab at naming an object sufficient to the task. “*The perfect object of belief,*” James argued, “... *would be a God or ‘Soul of the World,’ represented both optimistically and moralistically (if such a combination could be), and withal so definitely conceived as to show us why our phenomenal experiences should be sent to us by Him in just the very way in which they come*” (II.317). James did not think that this perfect object of belief had yet been articulated, but he was certain that he would embrace it if it ever were.

Although James’s subjectivities reflected the post-Protestant culture in which he lived, James presumed in this argument that these subjectivities were universal. Still, his utilization of the nonsectarian introspective methodology which he inherited was, I think, more honest than that of his American forebears. Unlike Edwards and Upham, James did not presume that he could name a universally acceptable moral object based upon his reasoning or his conscious experience alone. He did not try to smuggle in some form of the Christian God through reason or experience. Yet James did do some smuggling of his own by assuming that his subjectivities were universal.

Unaware perhaps that he was smuggling a culturally-derived subjectivity into his psychology, James did not explicitly reflect on the newness of his experiment: could such a subjectivity be preserved without its historically corresponding objectivity? Possessed of a subjectivity heavily indebted to a Protestant past, yet dispossessed of an adequate object of faith to sustain and explain that subjectivity, William James and the New Psychology bet that they could retain the one without the other. Yet, as I mentioned

earlier, this subjectivity, i.e., the will, precious to James and others, was largely lost to mainstream psychology in the 1930s, just as the objectivity, precious to Edwards and Upham, was lost to the New Psychology in the 1890s.

Terms and Definitions

In order to understand what follows, a few simple definitions of terminology are in order (see Fiering, 1981; and Guelzo, 1989, for further information). Sometimes I use the terms “voluntarist” or “voluntarism,” which are opposed to the terms “intellectualist” or “intellectualism.” These terms were used heavily by scholastic philosophers of the will (Fiering, 1981), although the terms continued to be used by “Great Psychologists” such as Wilhelm Wundt (Danziger, 2001). These terms represent alternative positions on the determination of the will. The basic intellectualist position is that the intellect is the decisive element in volition, and the will slavishly follows its dictates. The basic voluntarist position is that the will is not a slave to the intellect, but rather sometimes actually moves in a direction *opposite* to the intellect: “I know I ought to, but...” These are, I repeat, *basic* positions. The best policy is always to consider thinkers individually, because sometimes voluntarists may initially appear as intellectualists, or vice versa. Or, perhaps, sometimes thinkers may actually have a little of both in them (like William James). I should note in passing that either position may be used in a deterministic system, but that advocates of libertarian free will tend, I believe, to prefer intellectualism. This is because we seem to have a degree of control over our thoughts, while we do not seem to have direct control over our passions or inclinations. One other point is in order as well. The intellectualist/voluntarist distinction was used heavily when the soul was

understood to have *two* faculties. It becomes trickier to apply the terms when dealing with tripartite divisions of the soul, such as is the case with Thomas Upham.

The other terms that I frequently use are “compatibilist”, “incompatibilist”, and “libertarian.” These terms are commonplace in contemporary discussion of free will (McFee, 2000; Williams, 1980). The issue here has to do with one’s viewpoints on the relation between freedom and determinism. By “determinism” I mean the idea that all events, including psychological events, have a cause. Incompatibilists get their name because they think of freedom and determinism as necessarily antithetical terms, that is, freedom means freedom *from* the forces of determinism. Technically speaking, there are two kinds of incompatibilists, as defined here. One kind is the “hard determinist” who argues that all things have a cause and therefore free will is impossible. I do not frequently use this term in the dissertation because none of my authors were hard determinists. The other kind of incompatibilist is the “libertarian” who argues that all things are *not* determined, i.e., that there is some “wiggle room” (à la James) in the universe that allows for choices that are not simply part of the chain of cause and effect. Because determinism can be *transcended*, the incompatibilist argues, freedom is a possibility. Finally, the “compatibilist” argues that that freedom and determinism are *not* in tension with each other. A free act is an act done according to one’s own will or desire, even though this will or desire is subject to determinism. If one does what one wants to do then one has acted freely. Sometimes the term “soft determinist” is applied to the compatibilist position, but I rarely use this term since I find it potentially misleading.

Finally, two theological terms need to be defined, Augustinianism and Pelagianism (I attempt to define other theological terms as I go along). Within Christendom there have historically been (at least) two basic answers to the question of how a human being may act morally: the Augustinian approach, and the Pelagian approach. Perry Miller (1939) argued that the Augustinian impulse, which receives its name from the late 4th and early 5th century theologian Augustine, characterized the Puritans but was not limited to Puritans. It was in Puritan times conveyed in theological language, but, Miller argued, the “temperament” or “mood” was primary. This mood sensed the depravity of the human condition, the hardness and struggle of human life, and disdained any attempt to ignore or minimize the sin and misery of the human condition. Miller stressed God, sin, and regeneration as the main currents of Augustinianism.

The Pelagian impulse, named for the theological rival of Augustine, was much more sanguine about human abilities. Augustine biographer Peter Brown (2000) notes that Pelagius was a moralist who de-emphasized the depravity of human desires and impulses. Unlike Augustine who paid close attention to the subtleties and hypocrisies of human motivation, Pelagius saw obedience to God’s commands as an external, merely behavioral affair. Pelagian morality, ignoring the subtleties of human motivation, therefore saw moral activity as non-problematically attainable. Corresponding to the Augustinian emphases on God, sin and regeneration, the pillars of Pelagianism might be Man, ability, and self-determination. When this Pelagian impulse is fully affirmed, the Puritan paradox (i.e., humans have and do not have ability to act morally) can be considered lost.

As we shall see, particularly in the context of Thomas Upham's text, Mental Philosophy, Enlightenment philosophy, which placed strong emphasis on human ability, leaned in a "Pelagian" direction. In a post-Calvinistic context such as early nineteenth-century America, however, the Enlightenment, and the Pelagianism that it implied, could never be embraced in this regard without reservation or inconsistency. Upham wavers uncomfortably between the Calvinistic language of dependence and the Enlightenment language of human ability. The advent of the New Psychology was momentous in that it finally rejected the assumption that God (or some other less well-defined spiritual force) could be expected to intervene mysteriously in human action. Yet, the assumption that humans ought to behave morally *was not* yet discarded. Correspondingly the New Psychology of James can be found wavering between a simple Pelagian faith in human ability, and the desperate and anxious sense that human behavior is fatally determined by an impersonal and mechanistic universe.

A potentially confusing aspect of the following dissertation is the way in which I seem to indiscriminately move between the terms Arminian and Pelagian. Theologically, this is an improper thing to do. Arminianism, properly speaking, held (and holds) that God's grace is needed in order to believe and to behave morally, but that it is the human's decision whether or not to cooperate with this "prevenient" grace. Pelagianism was a more radical position which denied that this grace was needed. Humans possess the ability to do good.¹⁴ Although my usage of the terms is not always precise, I do attempt to retain these shades of meaning. For example, when Upham speaks of human ability without mentioning the grace of God, I will often use the term Pelagian to describe that

¹⁴ Although Brown (2000) typically portrays Pelagius in these terms, he does interestingly note that Pelagius thought that this was the case for *baptized* individuals. Therefore, one could argue that even Pelagius thought that grace of some sort was needed, but only at the very beginning of life.

kind of assertion. Further, keep in mind that my use of the term “Arminian” is quite broad, as I have mentioned above. I usually use the term to describe the “Arminian impulse,” or the desire to find some “strictly underived and original [moral] contribution” within ourselves (James, 1890, p. 579).

On The Selection of Texts for This Dissertation

This dissertation must be considered a preliminary investigation of an extremely complex topic. Early on in this research, I spent some time trying to ascertain precisely what college texts were used in American colleges before the twentieth century, and which of these are actually relevant to the loss of will. My leading source for this analysis was Louis Franklin Snow’s (1907) *The College Curriculum in the United States*, valuable not so much for its analysis of the evolution of the American college curriculum but rather for its transcriptions of important seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century documents cataloguing textbook usage in American colleges.

For the sake of convenience and simplicity, I have, in this dissertation, divided the history of textbook treatment of the will into four periods, with one textbook chosen to represent each of the four eras. A complete analysis of this topic, however, would require a more nuanced periodization, and, obviously, a consideration of more texts. What follows is an initial sketch of a more adequate periodization, a very brief consideration of potential texts that could be analyzed, and a rationale for those texts I have selected.

Period I: The Heyday of Dogma; 1636-1714. It is my initial impression that dogma “reigned” at American colleges until the eighteenth century, when a Protestant form of “Enlightenment” thinking became dominant. The leading theology textbook during this time period, as mentioned several times above, was William Ames’s *Marrow*

of Theology. This text therefore suggests itself as the best representative of this time period. Another text worth analyzing would be the lesser-known theology text of Johannes Wollebius (1626/1965) *Compendium Theologiae Christianae*. This text was used at American colleges for approximately the same duration, even outlasting Ames at Harvard. Additionally, college students were also exposed to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, which I have utilized above to provide a quick summary of Puritan belief and its relation to will.

Although theology was central at Harvard and, after 1701, at Yale, other kinds of textbooks dealing with the will were used. Norman Fiering (1981) analyzed several Latin ethics texts. Unfortunately, the translations that Fiering used are not available (personal correspondence), but Fiering's treatment does deal with issues related to will. Also, Henry More's (1690/1930) ethics text, the *Enchiridion Ethicum* was translated in the late seventeenth century. Fiering sees this text as transitional, so it too should be considered in the future. I feel comfortable skipping these early moral philosophy texts at this point, however, because they do seem to have been critically appropriated, always subordinated to Puritan theology. The new moral philosophy of the Enlightenment, however, was designed to effectively *replace* theology (Marsden, 1994).

Fiering (1981) also mentions that Physics texts contained treatment of the will. With this in mind I hope, in the future, to take a close look at Charles Morton's (1687/1940) *Compendium Physicae*, (an English text used by Harvard students between 1687-1728), and other available works. Also, two Logic texts used during this time have recently been republished: Morton's *A Logick System*, and William Brattle's *Compendium of Logick*, along with an analysis of the use of these works (Kennedy,

1995). This is quite exciting given that no one has yet attempted to explain the “Aristotelian and Cartesian Logic at Harvard,” and its connection to contemporary issues in the study of Logic in Europe. Both of these logic texts seem to deal at least superficially with the topic of will, and so seem worthy of brief mention.

Selecting a date for the close of this first period is of course a bit arbitrary, but I have chosen the fairly standard 1714, the year that Jeremiah Dummer donated a large collection of “New Learning” textbooks and the year when the Enlightenment is said to have arrived in New England (Evans, 1984).

Period II: Enlightenment, Orthodoxy, and the Creation of Nonsectarian Moral Cultures: 1714-1777. The arrival of crates of books, of course, does not constitute the actual arrival of Enlightenment thinking in America. The books first needed to be *read*, and the weight of the new ideas *felt* by a new generation of American thinkers. Two famous Yale students did just that, Jonathan Edwards, a Calvinist, and Samuel Johnson, for whom the new learning occasioned his conversion to Anglicanism and Arminianism. Both would become ministers, and both would write works dealing with the topic of the will. The second text I have chosen for this dissertation is Jonathan Edwards’ (1754) Freedom of the Will, which was to become *the* crucial text in the unfolding American drama. His text was read by students at Yale between 1761-1777 (Snow, 1907), and its publication spawned a century of debate within Calvinistic circles (Guelzo, 1989). Further, Edwards’ text continued to shape important American works in mental and moral philosophy well into the nineteenth century. Freedom of the Will was also an expression of Calvinist resistance not only to Arminianism, but also to the optimistic

assumptions of the Enlightenment, two “movements” which would gain a great deal of steam in America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Johnson’s (1752) much more humble accomplishment, the Elementa Philosophica, was read by only a handful of college students at King’s College in the 1750s and 60s (Humphrey, 1976). Yet it also represents a committed Christian’s attempt to appropriate Enlightenment thinking to the service of a somewhat different version of the Christian story. It would be interesting to examine the ways in which variations of the Christian story may have resulted in differences in the ways the Enlightenment was appropriated. Nevertheless, because this is a relatively minor text, I have put off examining it at this point.

Two other nonsectarian texts are very worthy of future consideration. When Johnson stepped down from the presidency of King’s college, Francis Hutcheson’s (1747) A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy¹⁵ began to be used. The text was also utilized at Philadelphia (Penn) and Rhode Island (Brown). So, although not an indigenous product, Hutcheson’s work was arguably the first serious introduction of Enlightenment moral philosophy into American colleges and therefore was a harbinger of things to come. The lectures in moral philosophy of Princeton president John Witherspoon (1982), which he “composed shortly after his arrival in America in 1768” (p. 2), are also very worthy of consideration, as Witherspoon is often credited with bringing the Scottish Enlightenment (particularly Hutcheson) to America. I have made the difficult decision of excluding these texts because my third text, Thomas Upham’s

¹⁵ The records I have examined do not specify which of Hutcheson’s two moral philosophy texts was used. The other possibility is his two-volume A System of Moral Philosophy (1755). I suspect that Hutcheson’s Short Introduction was used, not only because of its length, but because William Smith’s description of the mythical college of Miriania, which recommends Smith’s Ethics, was published in 1753, two years before the longer ethics was published.

Mental Philosophy can be understood as an American appropriation of these Scottish ideas. Still, a fully adequate account of the loss of will in American colleges should take at least one of these texts into account, probably Hutcheson.

Other relevant and varied texts used during this time period include Puffendorf's (1735) The Whole Duty of Man According to the Law of Nature, Wollaston's (1724/1974) The Religion of Nature Delineated, Fordyce's (1754/1990) The Elements of Moral Philosophy, Clap's (1765) An Essay on the Nature and Foundation of Moral Virtue and Obligation; Being a Short Introduction to the Study of Ethics; For the Use of The Students at Yale-College, and, of course, John Locke's (1690) An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Finally, natural philosophy texts began to be used heavily during this time period, titles including Maclaurin's (1748/1968) An Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discoveries, Martin's (1738) The Philosophical Grammar; Being a View of the Present State of Experimented Physiology, or Natural Philosophy in Four Parts, and Helsham's (1767) A Course of Lectures in Natural Philosophy. These texts appear to be devoid of interest in the will, which is significant by way of contrast to seventeenth century physics texts which did consider the will. Perhaps "the Arminian impulse" described above (which tended to see will as something that transcended nature) contributed to the exclusion of will from the new physics.

Although the overall trend in the eighteenth century was toward nonsectarianism, other, more theological texts continued to be used at colleges. Edwards' student Joseph Bellamy's (1750) text True Religion Delineated was used at Princeton until the early 70s, while Ames and Wollebius continued to serve Yale and Harvard. The period comes to an

end when Ames is finally removed from Yale's curriculum around the time of the American Revolution, in 1777 with the arrival of President Ezra Stiles.

Period III: The Revolutionary Era: 1777-1800. Also worthy of future consideration is the intellectual change taking place during the Revolutionary War. We can consider the end of William Ames's run as "the" theology textbook at Yale as the starting point of this period. Both events were significant for the history of the will in American universities. In the previous period, despite the move to form a nonsectarian moral culture, theology and Enlightenment appeared to be fairly equal concerns at American colleges. During this period theology continued to be taught at Yale through the Catechism, and at Harvard through Doddridge's (1763) *A Course of Lectures on the Principle Subjects in Pneumatology, Ethics and Divinity*. However, these sources for the teaching of theology were, in the case of the catechism, less well developed, and in the case of Doddridge, seemingly more scholarly and less dogmatic. Further, theology was no longer taught on Saturdays (as the tradition had been for over a century), being replaced by discussion of "chronology and history" (Snow, 1907).

This apparent decrease of interest in theological issues at Yale and Harvard was accompanied by an expected but dramatic increase in interest in politically oriented texts. Montesquieu's (1748/1989) *The Spirit of the Laws*, Vattel's (1758/1883) *The Law of Nations, or, Principles of the Law of Nature, Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns*, and Burlamaqui's (1783) *The Principles of Natural and Politic Law* began to be used at American colleges. Most dramatically at Yale, Montesquieu appears the same year Ames disappears. It seems that these political texts did not lay great stress upon the individual will, but I need to explore this in greater depth.

Regardless, there does appear to be a kind of movement toward political concern during the era of the Revolutionary War, and a small but potentially revolutionary change in the way theological issues were approached. This is consistent with May's (1976) assertion that "in the last quarter of the eighteenth century many Europeans and Americans turned their attention from religious and philosophical argument to political revolution" (p. 88). My somewhat arbitrary endpoint of this period is the publication of Witherspoon's lectures for the general public in 1800 (Witherspoon, 1982, p. 52).

Period IV: Between the Wars: The Great Scottish Awakening: 1800-1865. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Americans were emerging from a prolonged period of cultural flux (Noll, 1987). As reflected in the college curriculum, the nation was emerging from a period that was comparatively less concerned with theological issues, and more concerned with political. The religious, political, and philosophical future of the country was uncertain. Yet, the revivals beginning to sweep the nation at the end of the eighteenth century revitalized American Christianity in the nineteenth, in an Arminian direction. Collegiate philosophy also experienced a well-known injection of life through the conservative Scottish wing of the Enlightenment, the so-called Scottish Common Sense Realism of Thomas Reid and Dugald Stewart. Reid's (1785/1969) Essay on the Intellectual Powers of Man and (1788/1969) Essay on the Active Powers of Man began to serve as the basis of college lectures, and Stewart's texts Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, and The Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man were even more popular. The Scottish epistemology provided assurance that the natural and moral worlds could be known through the faculties of soul. This approach, by basing moral assertions on purportedly universal dictates of consciousness, provided the kind of

irenicism that an increasingly diverse, yet still predominantly Protestant nation needed. The topic of the will was addressed in the texts discussing the “active powers” of man.

In addition to these Scottish texts, American clergy/college educators began to write their own versions of intellectual and moral philosophy textbooks. Beginning slowly at first, with the publication of Thomas Upham’s (1826) Elements of Intellectual Philosophy,¹⁶ the number of American texts proliferated. One such textbook, The Elements of Moral Science by Brown’s president Francis Wayland (1837/1963) sold 137,000 copies in thirty years (Persons, 1983, p. 204). Although several American texts could be analyzed, such as Upham (1834), Day (1838), Tappan (1840), Rauch (1840), Schmucker (1842), Bledsoe (1845), Mahan (1846), Winslow (1850), Alexander (1852), Wayland (1854), Hickok (1855), Bowen (1855), Haven (1857), Upham (1861), Hazard (1864), Whedon (1864), and Rush (1965), I have focused on the last version of Thomas Upham’s oft-edited and widely adopted text Mental Philosophy. Since there may have been no more widely adopted textbook between 1830 and 1860 (Salter, 1986), and since Upham himself represents the nation’s movement from Calvinism to Arminianism (having had the traditionally un-Calvinistic experience of “entire sanctification” under Methodist perfectionist Phoebe Palmer sometime near 1839; Noll, 2002).

It might also be interesting to briefly address The Federalist, which was taught at American colleges during the early part of this era. For this, Daniel Walker Howe’s (1997) chapter title on the “political psychology of the Federalist,” would be helpful.

¹⁶ Another important appropriation of Scottish thought by an American clergyman is Asa Burton’s (1824) Essays on Some of the First Principles of Metaphysics, Theology, and Theology. Technically speaking, however, this was not a college textbook. Burton’s work is important to consider as background to Upham (Fay, 1939; Kosits, 2002c).

Period V: The Post-Civil War Era and the Deconstruction of American Mental Philosophy; 1865-1890. As the nation rebuilt following the Civil War, the indigenous mental and moral philosophy tradition began to be dismantled. Although the traditional mental and moral philosophy course continued to dominate American curricula, a small group of radical young thinkers was beginning to challenge the adequacy of the traditional approach. These thinkers, such as Hall (1874) and Dewey (1884), were beginning to sound the praises of European advances in physiology and were challenging American thinkers to embrace this “New Psychology.” The cutting-edge department of philosophy at Harvard actually began teaching the radical new science, while simultaneously retaining its old-time mental philosopher named Francis Bowen (Wetmore, 1991). Surely these were troubling times for the Old Psychology.

Although textbooks based upon the old model continued to be written (Bascom, 1869; Champlin, 1870; Munsell, 1871; Hopkins, 1862, 1873), some old-schoolers, as Karen Wetmore (1991) has shown, attempted to build bridges. The best example of this approach was Princeton’s James McCosh (e.g., 1881). His textbooks were a curious blending of physiology, evolutionary thinking, Scottish Common Sense Realism, and biblical Christianity.

Nevertheless, proponents of the New Psychology began to publish their own texts. Dewey published his in 1886, Ladd in 1887, and McCosh’s student Baldwin published his text in 1889. They were setting the stage for the publication of the work that would seal the victory of the New Psychology, and seal the final demise of the Old.

Period VI: The Intensely Ethical Science:1890-1930. The work to which I am referring, of course, is William James’s (1890) *The Principles of Psychology*, which is

the final work analyzed in this dissertation. James's work covered much of the same psychological territory as the older mental philosophy textbooks, but approached the topic with a deep respect for European experimentalism and physiology. The fact that James addressed traditional moral concerns should not surprise us. Advocates of the New Psychology went to great pains to demonstrate that their new science did not challenge traditional moral beliefs (Pickren, 2000). More to the point, John Dewey (1884) had assured his Andover Review readers that the New Psychology would be an "intensely ethical science" because it laid great stress upon the will. Dewey was certainly right. New Psychology textbooks (e.g., Royce, 1903; Angell, 1904; Pillsbury, 1911; Calkins, 1914; Woodworth, 1921, and Carr, 1925) indeed continued to discuss the topic of the will, locating the topic at or near the end of their textbooks, the culminating psychological topic, as the indigenous mental philosophers had before them. These chapters continued to manifest a deep concern for moral issues (Kosits, 2002a). Although I have ended this dissertation with William James's text, it seems clear that a more complete picture will include a careful consideration of these other texts as well.

Period VII: Loss. The topic of will was gradually dropped from introductory psychology texts in the 1920s and 30s. For this reason it would make sense in the future to examine the textbooks of the 1920s and 30s that did not include chapters on the will, examining the ways in which they differed from those that did.

Explanation of the "Jeremiadic" Structure of the Dissertation

To summarize the preceding section, I have selected four textbooks from among the many that could potentially be considered. These four texts, I believe, sufficiently (but certainly not exhaustively) capture the basic steps in the evolution of American

discourse on the topic of will. Nevertheless, I have skipped long periods of time in the process, and have assumed a degree of homogeneity within periods. Therefore, my conclusions are at this point tentative.

I have chosen to structure this dissertation after the format of the Puritan jeremiad. The jeremiad was a kind of sermon that was preached in late seventeenth century New England in response to a perceived apostasy on the part of colonists. Since the Puritans believed that their colony had a covenant with God (i.e., God would bless them for their obedience, and chastise or, ultimately, reject them for their disobedience), Puritan ministers such as Harvard president Increase Mather (1685) would preach sermons encouraging the people to return to the old paths and warning them of the judgments that would follow if they did not repent. Since the Biblical text used in many of these sermons was from Jeremiah, these sermons are now called “jeremiads” (Bercovitch, 1978; Bremer, 1995; Elliot, 1994).

The jeremiad, like all Puritan sermons, had three basic parts. After opening with a quote from the Bible, an “Explication” or summary of that text was first given. The next section was “Doctrine” which was a relatively brief statement of the lesson or lessons to be learned from the text. These lessons were often warnings. The doctrine was frequently subdivided into “propositions” or “reasons.” The third and final section was the “Application,” which attempted to articulate how the doctrine was to be fleshed out and put to use in the contemporary situation.

In brief, then, the first three chapters which portray William Ames’s views on will as expressed in his Marrow of Theology constitute Part I or the “Explication.” Ames’s intent was to provide a concise summary of Biblical teaching. The “text,” then, of this

“sermon” is the entire Protestant Bible, and the explication of this text is William Ames’s book. The “Doctrine” portion of the dissertation is Part II, an analysis of Jonathan Edwards’ Freedom of the Will. Edwards, like Upham was a Puritan, and would have endorsed the general assertions of Ames’s system. Edwards’ concern was to show that the Arminian view of free will and moral agency was incoherent and morally dangerous, and that the old-style Calvinism of Ames and others was indeed the rational and moral option. The “Doctrine” of Freedom of the Will, then, was that Arminianism needed to be rejected and Calvinism embraced in order to uphold reason, common sense, and morality itself.

As mentioned above, Edwards’ “jeremiad” both contributed to and was prophetic of the loss of will in American psychology. As a contributor to the loss, Freedom of the Will manifested some of the tensions that were inherent in the New England Jeremiad. Since New England Puritans believed they were constructing a “city on a hill,” the spheres of church and state overlapped a great deal. The ambiguity of the jeremiad therefore concerned its audience. Was it directed to the church (i.e., like-minded people within one’s own sect) or the state (i.e., everybody in the broader society)? As I will discuss in more detail below, Edwards’ (1754) text was not written for Puritans only or even for Calvinists only. He thought the topic of will demanded the attention of “Christians, and especially of divines” (p. 133). Since he was not preaching to his own sect only, then, he needed to adopt a nonsectarian method to accomplish his purposes. He therefore adopted a more “secular” and “Enlightened,” rational approach (Guelzo, 1989). Yet, as I mentioned above, the nonsectarian approach may actually have

contributed to the will's demise. The use of the jeremiad to structure this dissertation thus serves to ironize Edwards' contribution.

In 1953, E.G. Boring said that "the ancients of American psychology were not the prophets" (Fuchs, 2000, p. 5). Contrary to this, the jeremiad format also serves to *highlight* the ways Edwards was prophetic. The most explicitly "prophetic" statement uttered in Freedom of the Will, was "'Tis manifest, that Arminian notions of moral agency, and *the being* of a faculty of will, cannot consist together" (III.7.14). He also repeatedly said that the Arminian notion of moral agency and free will (overlapping concepts) "shuts itself wholly out of the world" (II.1.5). Edwards' thesis suggested an irony: that Arminian notions of moral agency and volitional freedom which were intended to *elevate* the status of the will actually elevated it so much as to remove it from reality. The Arminian will itself was, he seemed to be implying (and sometimes even explicitly stating), a fiction.

Still, Edwards did not foresee the ways this "fictional" will might manifest itself; and this lack of foresight is interesting not because he *should have* "seen it coming" but because he very well *might have* had he been a little less dismissive of his opponent's positions. As I argue in chapter 4 (following Paul Ramsey), Edwards tended to rush into refutation without fully considering his opponent's positions. This tendency is particularly evident in the case of his refutation of Thomas Chubb, the British Deist. Chubb utilized an approach to the topic of "motives" and the separation of psychological faculties that would be similar to Thomas Upham and others. Ramsey argued that "Edwards' real contention against Chubb should be that he separates too completely the faculties of will and understanding" (p. 76). In other words, Edwards did not provide a

sustained critique of the way faculty psychology may be used to forge a strict separation of will from motive, the very thing that led to the “shrinkage” of the will under Upham and James.

The “Application” part of the dissertation considers the psychology of will found in Thomas Upham’s (1869) Mental Philosophy and William James’s (1890) Principles of Psychology. Situated in the application portion of the jeremiad structure implies that these texts are susceptible to criticism as examples of “Arminianism.” This is only partially true. Arminianism, as mentioned above, was, properly speaking, a Dutch offshoot of Calvinism. Arminianism found its most “successful” expression in nineteenth century American Methodism, the fastest-growing denomination in the United States during that century. Is it proper to characterize Upham or James as “Arminians” in this sense? Properly speaking, no. Although Upham espoused a form of holiness theology that had Methodist roots, he remained a Congregationalist his entire life, and so probably would have identified himself as a Calvinist (Noll, 2002). James did not explicitly align himself with any Christian denomination. Yet, I think that both Upham and James are expressions of the “Arminian impulse” described above. This impulse to find original efficiency within the self seemed to be a chief concern of Edwards (1754), who continually denounced any position that seemed to posit a “sovereignty of the will” (IV.13.7). As Ames had said, efficiency to do good is of God only, and he would permit none to steal his glory.

Nevertheless, we find expressions of the belief in undetermined and autonomous efficiency in both Upham and James, and I take these as expressions of an “impulse” that pervades their entire psychology of will. For both Upham and James, freedom and moral

virtue require that an act be wholly one's own. In Upham's (1869) system this was possible because God had given to man "...as an attribute of his own nature, an amount of real efficiency suited to the limited sphere which Providence has allotted him....There is no *accountable* existence without power..." (I.274). Further, although a gift of God, the exercise of that efficiency was entirely one's own. God would never and could never violate it. Similarly, James (1890) argued that "...our autonomy in the midst of nature depends on our not being pure effect, but a cause..." (I.447-448), seeing the free acts of the will as "the one strictly underived and original contribution which we make to the world!" (II.579). So, although not Arminians, both Upham and James did possess the "Arminian impulse." The major goal of the chapters to follow is to show how this Arminian impulse shaped the moral psychologies of Upham and James, and how it contributed to the loss of will in American psychology.

PART I: EXPLICATION
WILLIAM AMES' MARROW OF THEOLOGY

“God therefore uses means not because of any lack of power, but because of the abundance of his goodness; he communicates a certain dignity of efficiency to his creatures and in them makes his own efficiency more perceptible.”

William Ames, *Marrow of Theology*, (I.IX.6)

INTRODUCTION TO PART I

The notion of a faculty of will emerged in the context of the Christian story of fall and redemption (Arendt, 1978; Guelzo, 1989; cf. Irwin, 1992). This was true of the story of the faculty of the will in America. In New England (particularly Massachusetts Bay), of course, the prevailing version of the Christian story was Puritan. Further, since the “major players” in this story of the will in the American academy after Ames were New Englanders (two of three lived most of their lives in Massachusetts) and products of New England colleges (Edwards of Yale, Upham of Dartmouth and Andover Seminary, James of Harvard), it is not surprising that (at the very least) vestiges of the original myth may be found throughout the entire history of the tradition. We might therefore say that the story of the will in America is, at least in part, a Puritan story.

If we would desire to understand the nuances of the Puritan story in the American collegiate context, there is perhaps no better place to start than William Ames’s Marrow of Theology, “one of the great works of Puritan systematic theology” (Bremer, 1995, p. 22). Although Ames was not “American” (he never set a foot in the New World), he had hoped to move to Massachusetts and may have assumed the Presidency of Harvard if he had. Nevertheless, his Marrow became “*the* theology textbook at Harvard,” (Marsden, 1994) and was utilized in American colleges of Puritan descent until the time of the Revolution (Snow, 1907).

If we would approach this history of the loss of will in American psychology as a Jeremiad, we must start with an “explication.” As noted in the introduction, the explication portion of the Puritan Jeremiad centered on a particular biblical text. For our

purposes, we may consider the “text” of this jeremiad the entire Protestant Bible, and Ames’s Marrow a Puritan exposition of the Bible’s major themes, particularly the nature of God, of Humanity, of Redemption, and of the Church. The Marrow is literally filled with references to the Bible, and, consistent with the biblicism of the Puritan movement, Ames attempted to provide scriptural support for every doctrine he taught. In my quotations of Ames, therefore, I have often left in his own scriptural “proof texts,” so that this Biblically-centered approach will be evident. Although Ames was systematic and rational, he clearly believed that his system had Foundations in the very mind of God.

Ames’s systematic approach to theology was strongly influenced by the logic of Peter Ramus, a seventeenth century French convert to Protestantism. Ramus defined himself against Scholasticism, teaching “...that all things based on the authority of Aristotle were overelaborate and artificial” (Sprunger, 1972, p. 15). “Ramist” logic purported to be an approach “more akin to natural reasoning” (p. 15) than the artificial scholastic approach. Due to Ramus’ Protestantism, his logic was embraced at Cambridge, where Ames received his education. Veneration for Ramus can be found in the Marrow. Yet, as Ames biographer Keith Sprunger accurately noted, “In actual practice Ramism often became primarily a method of organization discernible by its famous dichotomy” (p. 15). Ramus argued that a topic was best approached through dichotomization. Ames fully embraced this approach. So, theology, for example, was understood by Ames to have two parts: faith in God, and Observance. God, in turn, is reduced to “sufficiency,” and “efficiency.” The efficiency of God is manifest in

“creation,” and “providence.” This tendency of Ames to dichotomize nearly *everything* is evident in the following three chapters of this dissertation.¹⁷

The topic of will permeates the Marrow of Theology, so much so that the entire book could be summarized as a story about two wills. On the one hand is the will of God which created, sustains, and governs all things. This infinitely glorious God seeks his own glory not only by making his own nature known through nature and scripture, but also by unfolding a drama of redemption that highlights his power, justice, and mercy. On the other hand is the will of the human person. Although first created with a will that submitted to the divine will, humanity through the fall of Adam lost this will to God-centered good. In the fallen condition, humanity despises and avoids the things of God. Salvation, then, is the story of how God redeems certain members of the human family through a radical reorganization and restoration of their wills.

In Puritan thought, will was not a term of precise psychological signification. It was, however, a *meaningful* term psychologically, having to do with the impulsive or active powers of humanity. Inclinations, desires, affections, choices, and habits were all subsumed under this umbrella of the faculty of the will. (An analogy today might be a term like “cognition,” which subsumes more specific psychological phenomena such as perception, attention, memory, language and thought). This breadth and imprecision is explained by the fact that Puritanism was not interested in psychological niceties for their own sake. It was concerned that the direction and tendency of one’s *entire being* was a God-ward tendency. The term “will,” then, although broad in its psychological signification, did have a precise ethical signification. To be endowed with will was to be

¹⁷ For a more careful consideration of how “Ramist” logic influenced Puritan thought, see Eusden (1968) and Miller (1939).

made in the image of God and to therefore be obligated that one's own being conformed to the Will of its creator. I will argue that the very breadth of the concept of the faculty of will was one of its strengths, and that subsequent attempts to give will a more narrow and precise meaning may have been part of the concept's undoing.

The explication of Ames's text contained in chapter 1-3 is detailed. The reader may at times wonder what all that theology has to do with a history of a psychological construct. To ameliorate this reaction, I have throughout the first three chapters attempted to be explicit about how the topic of the will is related to the various theological details found in The Marrow of Theology. Still, perhaps the most important insight to grasp from these chapters is that the concept and psychology of will in the earliest textbooks used in America was surrounded, sustained, and even submerged by a thick, detailed *story* about the nature and purpose of the universe. The preservation of that sectarian story (or some other such story) ensured the preservation of the faculty of will. Yet the experiment of American higher education (and the enlightenment in general) was to see if the faculty of will could be preserved without relying on any particular sect's story. (Indeed, the experiment of the enlightenment may have been to see if the will so extracted could become the story itself, but that would be a paper in itself). Moving from Ames to Edwards to Upham and to James, we will find that "the old story" becomes less sharp, less detailed. All authors *assumed* that they lived in a moral world, and that their wills had something to do with their own conformity to the demands of that moral world. Yet the increasingly diffused stories made the nature of those moral worlds less clear, and the introduction of other increasingly persuasive Enlightened and naturalistic stories made the old moral world seem to shrink. In the process, the will

itself grew smaller and more diffuse. In Ames, then, we find an author describing a story largely forgotten, but a story that was nevertheless able to sustain a concept such as will. “All that theology” made a big difference.

CHAPTER I

GOD'S EFFICIENCY AND MAN'S DEFICIENCY

Ames's Marrow of Theology divides into two Books, reflecting the Puritan belief that the Bible taught two main things. As the Westminster Shorter Catechism put it: "The scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man." Book One of the Marrow therefore deals with the doctrines that Ames understood the Bible to teach ("faith") and Book Two deals with the "duty God requires of man," or "observance."

This chapter is a commentary on roughly the first third of Book One, which serves to dramatize the problem of will. The reader is introduced to the Object of Puritan theology: a God of staggering power and unwavering purpose. The "first cause" of whatsoever comes to pass, this God is the source of all good in the world. Therein lay the rub for humanity—any good that the creature would perform would be a *derived* good. Further, God had also foreordained that even the derived goodness of humanity would be lost through an historic fall from grace. Adam ate the fruit and thereby led humanity into an estate of sin and misery. Release from this captivity to sin would be a *human* impossibility.

The Nature of Theology

When describing the nature of theology, Ames declared that, "theology is the doctrine or teaching of living to God" (I.i.1). Unlike other types of knowledge that derive from "human inquiry," and "can be developed through sense perception, observation,

experience, and induction” (I.i.3), theology is given by God through the revelation found in the Bible. This thoroughgoing Puritan biblicism pervades the Marrow and is an early example in this work of the Puritan sense of human weakness and absolute dependence upon the Other. In this worldview, the Puritan shuddered at the consideration of life apart from God. “Living,” Ames declared, “is the noblest work of all...,” and the highest form of living “is that which approaches most closely the living and life-given God,” or “living to God” (I.i.4-5). Ames’s summary of how humanity lives to God incorporates the principles of action, teleology and the source of human righteousness and strength: “men live to God when they live in accord with the will of God, to the glory of God, and with God working in them” (I.i.6). The only life worth living is the God-centered life.

Given the importance of practice, or living according to God’s will, Ames asserted that “the first and proper subject of theology is the will” (I.i.9). Rather, than being a merely “speculative discipline” that fills the mind but leaves the heart unmoved, the theology of the Bible *moves* men toward their “final end.” The Puritan story was profoundly concerned with the way human beings responded to the living God. The center of human responsiveness was the will.

Since the revelation of God found in the scripture is so all-encompassing, it touches upon all other realms of inquiry: “...there is no precept of universal truth relevant to living well in domestic economy, morality, political life, or lawmaking which does not rightly pertain to theology” (I.i.12). Indeed, the theology of the Bible is a philosophy of life, providing a “guide and master plan for our highest end” (I.i.13). The theology of the William Ames sought to organize and explain all of life, to orient the self and society to

God. As Ames's theology aimed at the reform of the self, it was strongly oriented toward the human will, understood as the center, the "heart" of human beings.

In "The Division of Parts of Theology," Ames dichotomized theology into faith and observance, giving a litany of Scriptures from the Old and New Testaments to illustrate the basic idea that God requires *both* belief and obedience. These two are separable analytically, but not in practice. On the analytical level, Ames utilized the scholastic division between the first act (which has to do with being) and the second act (which has to do with the operation or working of the first; Eusden, 1968, p. 78), Ames argued that there is an "order of nature" in that faith, the first act, which is an "inborn principle of life" (I.ii.5) serves as the source for observance, the second act. In the case of true faith, however, the two "are always joined together" (I.ii.4), and in this conjunction Ames argued that faith itself is an act of will. Even at this early stage, Ames affirms that human ability to do good is derivative. Faith is not a matter of human willpower, but a gift, an "inborn principle." The issue of human *ability* pervades the history of the concept in American psychology.

The First Act: Faith as an Act of Will

It is in the context of his discussion of faith that Ames first begins to unpack his assertion that the will is the proper subject of theology, arguing that faith itself, when biblically understood, is most centrally an act of will (although the understanding is involved). We also clearly see in this context what will is *for*: belief in God. Generally speaking, Ames defined faith as "the resting of the heart on God...so that we may be saved from all evil through him and may follow all good." Faith is an "act of the whole man," as opposed to a merely intellectual or volitional activity. Although belief typically

involves “an act of the understanding as it gives assent to evidence,” the will must also “embrace the good thus proved” by the understanding in order for Biblical faith to be in place. The Puritans were ever worried about merely “speculative knowledge,” following Paul’s assertion that “knowledge puffs up.” Filling the head with the “light” of theology could only be justified by the attendant “heat” of the inflamed will. Implied in this belief that the intellect may “prove the good,” and yet the will not follow clearly breaks from an intellectualist understanding of will, which asserts that will is “blind” and always follows the dictates of understanding (Fiering, 1981).

True faith, then, because it actively embraces and rests in God, must be understood as an “act of the will.” To put the matter in biblical language, Ames argued that “faith is a receiving. John 1:12, *As many as received him, or who believe*” (I.iii.1). Further, “although faith always presupposes a knowledge of the Gospel, there is nevertheless no saving knowledge in anyone...except the knowledge which follows this act of the will and depends upon it. John 7:17, 8:31, 32; 1 John 2:3” (I.iii.4). So, the understanding provides an object to be believed, God, as presented in the gospel, and the will embraces the object through faith. For the precious objectivities of the Puritan faith, there were always corresponding subjectivities. Paradoxically, only *after* this act of will is the mind endued with “saving knowledge” (I.iii.4). Prior to the will’s involvement, after all, the would-be Christian only possesses speculative knowledge. “True Christian faith which has a place in the understanding always leans upon divine testimony, as far as it is divine. But it cannot be received without a genuine turning of the will towards God” (I.ii.5). Similarly, faith is not aimed at God as a mere abstraction, or “as he is considered in himself” but “as we live well by him” (I.iii.7).

Ames also insisted that faith, based as it is upon divine testimony, rests upon a more sure foundation than other kinds of knowledge, which relies upon the fallible foundation of human reason. “Faith is not more uncertain and doubtful because it leans on testimony alone, but rather more certain than any human knowledge because of its nature. This is so because it is brought to its object on the formal basis of infallibility—yet because of imperfection in the inclination [*habitus*] from which faith flows, the assent of faith often appears weaker in this or that person than the assent of knowledge” (I.iii.6).

Ames portrayed faith in terms that he supposed all could understand. The faith whereby the Christian trusts God is “true and proper trust” (I.iii.13), which involves a leaning upon and relying upon God. Ames believed that all people have faith in something, if not God, then “wisdom, power, friends, and their own riches” (I.iii.13). The trust placed upon God is intimate, consisting of union with God, and far exceeding merely speculative knowledge, “since faith is the first act of our life whereby we live to God in Christ, it must consist of union with God, which a mere assent to the truth concerning God cannot effect” (I.iii.18).

Furthermore, this union and surrender cannot be achieved through speculative powers, but through the giving of the self to God through an act of will, “...he cannot make that surrender through any assent of the understanding—only through a consent of the will” (I.iii.19). Ames noted that the idea that faith belongs primarily to the intellect contradicts the experience of the faithful, which is that “certainty of the understanding may be lacking in some at times, even though they have truth faith hidden in their hearts” (I.iii.22). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the act of trust takes place in the will apart from any contact with the understanding, rather faith “is a single virtue and brings

forth acts of one quality throughout, not partly of knowledge and partly of the affections, 1 Cor. 13” (I.iii.13). Further, though true faith always inflames the human will, it cannot be *produced* by the human will, but rather finally depends upon “the operation and inner persuasion of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:3, *No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit*” (I.iii.12). The Puritan paradox of ability and inability is illustrated well in this tension.

The Awesome Object of Human Reception

Since God is the object of faith, Ames then moves to discuss God, which is crucial to understanding Ames’s psychology of will. Although the will is the “proper *subject* of theology” (I.i.9, italics mine), this subject has meaning only in relation to its proper object. Just as Augustine “discovered” (Arendt, 1978; Guelzo, 1989) the will in the context of Christian theology, so too Ames’s psychology of will is infused with vitality and takes shape vis-à-vis the Christian God.

Ames’s theology is always concerned with preserving a sense of the greatness of God and the relative weakness and contingency of the human condition. This concern is very clearly manifested in Ames’s discussion of God’s essence. Although God, “as he is in himself, cannot be understood by any save himself” (I.iv.2), he has nevertheless condescended to reveal himself “in a human way” through the scriptures (I.iv.4), which are geared toward “human comprehension” (I.iv.5). The scripture is infallible and from God, yet God intentionally “has revealed himself to us...from the back, so to speak, not from the face...He is seen darkly, not clearly, so far as we and our ways are concerned. 1 Cor. 13:12, *Through a glass darkly, after a fashion*” (I.iv.3). The revelation of God in the

holy scripture nevertheless is sufficient for living: “what has been revealed of God suffices us to live well” (I.iv.7).

Just as faith is a unified act of intellect and will that receives the Holy object, there are two aspects of God’s person which serve as the foundation or “pillars” of faith (I.iv.9). Using the Ramist approach, Ames dichotomizes the knowledge of God into *sufficiency*, which is God’s “quality of being sufficient in himself for himself and for us” (I.iv.10), and *efficiency*, or the “working power” which is “that by which he works all things in all things. Eph 1:11, *He who works all things...*” (I.vi.1). In this portrayal of God, as we shall see below, the Harvard student was confronted with a God who does whatever he pleases, who is never frustrated, and is therefore always most happy or “blessed.” The Harvard student, as we shall see, was confronted with Will itself.

The Sufficiency of God: Essence, Subsistence, and the Ontological Basis of Will

The sufficiency of God, which, again, is “his quality of being sufficient in himself for himself and for us” (I.iv.10), is the “first reason” (I.iv.11) that the will receives or trusts in God. As he is wont to do, Ames dichotomizes this sufficiency into God’s *essence* and his *subsistence*, or his triune “manner of being” (I.iv.12). In terms of essence, God is “absolutely the first being. Isa. 44:6, *I am the first and the last; besides me there is no god...*” From this reality, three things follow. First, “God is one and only one” (I.iv.15), second, “...God exists of himself...” (I.iv.16), and, third, directly relevant to the issue of will, “...the quality which is called passive is not in him” (I.iv.17).

To accommodate human weakness, which cannot understand God in “one act of comprehension” (I.iv.18), God’s nature is explained in scripture as “consisting of many attributes” (I.iv.18). As we might expect of Will itself, these attributes are “God’s act—

single, most pure, most simple” (I.iv.20). Ames then lists ten propositions that describe the necessary correlates of the fact that the attributes belong to God himself. Although many of the attributes of God derive their “names” from humans who are the *imago dei*, they belong first to God in their substance. The attributes of humans are derived from God (I.iv.22). Further, unlike human beings, the attributes of God “do not diminish or grow” (I.iv.23). The properties in human beings that are similar to the divine attributes are imperfect, but the attributes in God are “divine perfections” (I.iv.25).

The supremacy of God is further evidenced by the fact that scripture declares that God is a spirit who has “life in himself” (I.iv.36). “Hence the chief title of God, by which he is distinguished from all idols, is that he is the living God...” (I.iv.37). Ames, always eager to draw the practical conclusion, argued that since God is “the fountain of all life,” faith “rests in God alone,” the “fountain” of life (I.iv.38). In addition to being the author of life, which God shares with the creature, God possesses properties that he does not share with the creature (I.iv.39). God is infinite, i.e., “beyond any limitation of essence...” (I.iv.43), immeasurable, incomprehensible (i.e., without boundary; I.iv.46) and therefore omnipresent (I.iv.47), eternal “without beginning and end...” (I.iv.48).

The purpose of these incommunicable properties is to show “...how great God is...” (I.iv.40), once again exalting the divine and humbling the human. Ames argued that these qualities of God have practical, subjective implications. God’s incomprehensibility, for example, lifts faith to look for more than just a “measure of blessedness to be communicated by God, but an immeasurable glory” (I.iv.45). Since God is eternal, faith “apprehends eternal life in God” (I.iv.49). In other words, the will is moved to embrace certain aspects of salvation by the appropriation of the Puritan

understanding of God's nature. What is more, the reaction of the human will is in this context normative, i.e., the will *ought* to react to God in this way. There is an appropriate and normative subjectivity corresponding to God's awesome objectivity.

These considerations are relevant not only to the human will, but also to God, who *also* possess faculties of will and understanding. God has properties "through which he is said to work." These include "all the properties of essence and quantity, namely, simplicity, immutability, eternity, and immeasurableness" (I.iv.50). The properties are "conceived" in a dichotomous way: as "faculties" and "virtues which adorn the faculties" (I.iv.51). So, in this way, God himself can be understood as possessing "understanding and will" (I.iv.52). The fact that the omnipotent God also possesses these faculties has subjective implications, because "faith leans on the one who knows what is needful for us and is also willing to supply it" (I.iv.52).

The aforementioned properties "of essence and quantity, namely, simplicity, immutability, eternity, and immeasurableness" (I.iv.50) apply to the faculties of understanding and will in God. Thereby, the uniqueness of the divine understanding and will vis-à-vis humanity is starkly highlighted. God's understanding is simple, "without composition, argument or classification. Heb. 4:13, *All things are naked and open to his eyes*" (I.iv.53), unchangeable, "Acts 15:18, *Known to God are all his works from before all ages*" (I.iv.54), eternal, neither beginning or ending, and infinite, "because he perceives the whole truth of and reason for everything..." (I.iv.56). Similarly, the will of God is "single and totally one in him" (I.iv.58), unchangeable, "because he always wills the same and in the same manner. Ps. 33:11, *The counsel of the Lord remains forever*" (I.iv.59), eternal, because he does not begin to will what he did not will before, nor cease

to will what he willed before. Mal. 3:6, *I the Lord do not change*” (I.iv.60), and infinite, because it has no outward limitation” (I.iv.61). In this scheme, “virtue” in God is understood as “the perfection of the understanding and will; wisdom, holiness, and the like are virtues of this sort in God” (I.iv.63), and this virtue is understood as a “readiness to act” rather than “an inclination distinct from faculty and action” (I.iv.64).

Since the human will and understanding by definition do not possess these incommunicable properties, it follows that human faculties necessarily lack the virtue that God possesses. So while humans share will and understanding because of their relationship to God, human will and understanding are by nature limited. Yet, as always, the human will and understanding take comfort in the nature of God’s faculties, “...faith has a firm foundation because it leans on God, the possessor and author of all perfection, blessedness, and glory” (I.iv.67).

The *subsistence* of God has to do with God’s tri-unity, or the Christian account of God as a Holy Trinity. In this context, God is understood as three subsistences, each with relative properties (I.v.1). Consistent with the orthodox understanding of Trinity accepted across all denominations, God’s essence, described above, is one, but is “common to the three subsistences.” Consistent with Ames’s stress on the *activity* of God, he focuses on those aspects of the Trinitarian formulation that focus on activity within the Godhead. The relative property of the Father “is to beget” (I.v.12), while the relative property of the Son “is to be begotten” (I.v.13), and the relative property of the Holy Spirit “is to be breathed, to be send forth and to proceed from both the Father and the Son...” (I.v.14).

Just as is the case of the Father and the Son, “life, understanding, will, and power are everywhere attributed” to the Holy Spirit, “...along with all acts proper to a person.” Practically speaking, since Father, Son, and Holy Spirit alike are all understood to be the one God, and each person of the Trinity participates in a unique way in the gift of salvation, the Triune God again appears as a divine objectivity with a requisite human subjectivity, as an worthy object of faith, “...in every way sufficient to impart salvation to us. For all love, grace, and those things which pertain to living well come from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. 2 Cor. 13:14” (I.v.24).

So, in Ames’s theology, human will and understanding find their ontological roots in God’s nature. As human beings acknowledge, worship and submit to this Will, they come to understand their own wills, and to experience their will’s transformation.

The Pure and Unencumbered Will: The Efficiency of God

After having explained the sufficiency of God, consisting in God’s essence and subsistence, Ames turned to discuss the “efficiency” of God, or the “working power of God” which is “...that by which he works all things in all things. Eph 1:11, *He who works all things...*” (I.vi.1). In order to avoid the charge that God is dependent or reactive in any way, Ames asserted that “the effecting, working, or acting of God, insofar as they are in God in action, are not other than God himself...” (I.vi.2). In fact, God’s great independence and power is evidenced in the fact that “he works all things in all things, because the efficiency of all things depends upon the first efficient cause not only in the matter of their substance but also in the matter of all their real circumstances...” In other words, all things that manifest efficiency, or the ability to bring about particular results, ultimately receive their efficiency from God. He turned to Lamentations for scriptural

support of this idea, “Lam. 3:37, 38, *Who says something and it exists, if the Lord does not command it? Out of the mouth of the Most High do not evil and good proceed?*”

Ames notes that this assertion that God is the first cause of all things does *not* imply that God somehow is the source of imperfection in the world. He developed this idea in more detail when considering the fall of Adam and the origin of human evil.

Ames dealt with the “meaning” of the efficiency of God in light of God’s essence and subsistence, of which I will deal with God’s essence here. Regarding the essence of God, efficiency pertains to God’s omnipotence (I.vi.5). God’s power, when abstractly “considered as simple power” is part of God’s nature “as a being” and therefore is “prior to his knowledge and will” (I.vi.6). When considering the “execution of God’s efficiency,” however, power must be thought of as following God’s knowledge and will, quoting Psalm 115 and 135, “*Whatever he pleases he does*” (I.vi.7). So, the “order” of these things in God is first power (considered as a simple power), then knowledge, then will, and then efficient power (I.vi.8). This “efficient power” of God is the same as the “effectual will” of God. This makes the will of God, “as the effecting principle,” to be the “the cause of power.” Ames calls this “effecting will” of God “omnipotence in action” quoting Psalm 33:9, “*He commanded, and it was done...*” (I.vi.9). In view of this omnipotence of God, “by which he is able to effect all things which he wills or could will” (I.vi.11), Ames thought it appropriate that the Old Testament would refer to God as “mighty God,” and “God all-sufficient,” and “The Lord Almighty,” etc. (I.vi.12).

Jealously guarding against the idea that God may have “active power,” which would imply that “God is passive and moves himself to act,” Ames asserts, “God is rather most pure act” (I.vi.13), and that the “very essence of God is that power which makes

him powerful.” God is pure act and pure power (I.vi.14). The only time it is proper to speak of active power in God is from the lowly position and perspective of human beings who come to experience and learn the power of God, learning to say along with Christ, “*all things are possible with God*” (I.vi.15).

Limited only by possibility (I.vi.16—God’s will cannot “involve a contradiction, either in God or in created things. 2 Tim. 2:13, *He cannot deny himself*”; I.vi.17), God’s omnipotence can be dichotomized into “absolute power” and “ordaining or actual power” (I.vi.18). Absolute power, Ames argued, “is that by which God is able to do all things possible although they may never be done...” (I.vi.19), while ordaining power is that by which God “not only can do what he wills but actually do what he wills” (I.vi.20), quoting supporting scriptures such as Psalm 115:3- “But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.”

God’s Decree and Counsel

Concerning the “exercise of God’s efficiency,” Ames argued that the “decree of God” came first (I.vii.1). This decree is God’s “firm decision by which he performs all things through his almighty power according to his counsel” (I.vii.2). This decree always “involves counsel” (I.vi.8), which is “as it were, his deliberation over the best manner of accomplishing anything already approved by the understanding and the will” (I.vii.9). Unlike human judgment, this counsel does not rely upon fallible “inquiry.” God’s superiority is evidenced by the fact that God doesn’t ask questions, do research, or learn to reason. Nevertheless, there is something akin to human thought in God which Ames calls “deliberation.”

Three things “concur” in the divine counsel (I.vii.11). First, the purpose of each decree is always the glory of God. Second, the “mental conception of that end” (I.vii.1) is always involved, which is an “idea” that is the “highest perfection of reason.” This conception is the “exemplary cause of all things to be done” (I.vii.13). In this manner of speaking, Ames appears to be speaking “intellectualist” language, i.e., the primacy of the intellect in the determination of volition. In other words, the will of God appears to follow the understanding of God. Ames seeks to quickly change this initial impression, however, in two ways. First, the term “ideas” may lead to a misunderstanding of God, so Ames compares God’s “ideas” with human ideas. In people, ideas are formed as a person interacts with “things themselves,” which “exist first in themselves and then come into the senses of men and finally to the understanding, where they can form an idea to direct a subsequent operation.” In God, however, things are known “by genesis” and are therefore “first in his mind before they are in themselves” (I.vii.15). God’s mind does not come to know “things themselves” but is rather the cause of all things to be known.

The possibility that Ames has an intellectualist view of God is further challenged in the context of Ames’s discussion of the “division of divine knowledge.” The “knowledge of simple understanding” in God “refers to all *possible* things” (I.vii.25, italics mine), while the “knowledge of vision” is “the knowledge of all future things” (I.vii.26). These two knowledges are related to the sufficiency and efficiency of God: “The things which God knows through the knowledge of simple understanding he knows by his all-sufficiency, but those things he knows through the knowledge of vision he knows by his efficiency or by the decree of his own will” (I.vii.27). In other words, God may know all contingencies (or “all supposed conditions” as the Westminster divines put

it) but this “knowledge” is not effectual (i.e., does not issue in decree) until his will is added to it. This is analogous to his discussion of faith discussed above, which is distinguished from “speculative” knowledge by the engagement of the will. Once again, we find ontological basis for Ames’s psychology of belief.

The distance between divine and human knowledge is further accentuated by Ames’s discussion of “middle knowledge,” whereby “hypotheses” that might somehow determine or precede God’s decree are excluded, because these would posit “that events will happen independently of the will of God,” and also “makes some knowledge of God depend on the object.” Again, God’s absolute will and independence are maintained, and the contrast between the omnipotent and “effectual” will of God is contrasted with man’s impotence and inefficacy.

The third thing that “concurs” in the divine counsel is “the intention and agreement of the will” (I.vii.11) or, put another way, the “good pleasure” of God (I.vii.32). This good pleasure may be defined as “an act of the divine will freely and effectively determining all things” (I.vii.32). Ames further asserts that God’s will is free, “because whatever it wills it wills not by necessity of nature but by counsel” (I.vii.34). Further, since the will of God “depends on nothing else” (unlike the will of humans and angels, which depend ultimately upon God), God’s will is “most free, completely and absolutely free” (I.vii.35). There is further no necessary connection between God’s nature and his “outward acts.” Unlike his inward acts which are necessarily connected to his nature, there is no “natural necessity” determining outward acts, only “preceding choice.” So the will of God is self-determined when it comes to outward actions. God’s accomplishes all that he desires. “This will is effectual, because whatever he wills he

effects in his own time; neither is there anything not done if he wills it to be done” (I.vii.37).

In terms of causality, God’s will reigns supreme, causing all occurrences in the world. “The will of God is therefore the first cause of things...” (I.vii.38). Yet, constrained by nothing, the will of God “as it works outwardly does not presuppose the goodness of the object...” (I.vii.38). Indeed, “properly speaking, therefore, there is *no cause* of God’s will” (I.vii.39, italics mine). “Here it is rightly said that God wills one thing to exist in order to produce another. But it cannot be said that one thing is properly a cause whereby the will of God is moved internally to appoint the other thing” (I.vii.40). In other words, God does not *react* to creaturely happenings. Creaturely happenings are an expression of God’s will of decree. Indeed, God reacts not even to himself. Since God wills “all things together and at once in only one act” it is improper to think of God’s “willing of one thing” to be “the efficient cause in him of his willing another.”

Although it is undoubtedly true that God wills “many things which will not take place except upon some antecedent act of the creature” Ames insists that God’s will still “does not itself properly depend upon the act of the creature.” As the first cause of all things, even the act of the creature is subject to the will of God. The will of God, proceeding from God’s “omniscient, omnipotent, and infinitely blessed nature,” is starkly contrasted with man’s will, which, in its imperfection and lack of power is sometimes reduced to a “woulding” (I.vii.42). Ames challenged the notion that God’s will can change depending upon the action of the creature on the grounds that it “makes the will of God mutable and dependent upon the act of the creature, so that as often as the act of

the creature is changed God's will itself is changed" (I.vii.43). Opposed to this, every act of humanity is ordained by God (I.vii.44).

God's will extends beyond the determination of human action. "God's will determines *all things* without exception: the greatest, the least, the contingent, the necessary, the free" (emphasis mine). He goes on to list a number of scriptures to show that God determines the hearts of men, purportedly chance events, the falling of sparrow, and all created things:

The Scripture shows this with respect to all kinds of things...Concerning Pharaoh, Exod. 13, where God disposed all things that he might move Pharaoh to follow and overthrow the people of Israel, nay, he hardened him that he might follow them, still Pharaoh and Israel worked freely. Likewise in the selling of Joseph, wherein all things happened freely and contingently, God determined it according to his own will. It is the same with the very heart of man [scriptures]. With a man killing another by chance, Exod. 21:13. With the lot cast into the urn, Prov. 16:33. With sparrows falling to the ground, with all the hairs of a man's head, Matt. 10:29, 30. With the lilies, the flowers, and the grass of the earth, Matt. 6:28, 30. And finally with all created things, Job 38; Ps. 104; Isa. 45:7; Jer. 14:22.

(I.vii.44)

If this list of scripture references was not enough to convince his readers, Ames further argued that God's determination of all things is logically necessary, for "if God did not determine all things, his will would not be the first cause simply and universally. Those who think otherwise must necessarily presuppose two first principles or more than two,

which is plainly far from all truth” (I.vii.46). Since it is impossible that there be two *first* principles, it must be affirmed that God is this principle.

The will of God is unlike the knowledge and power of God. In knowledge, God “knows all things that are to be known,” and in God’s power, he “can do all possible things.” Both of these aspects of God’s nature are therefore “stretched forth beyond those things which actually have been, are, and shall be.” God’s will, however, concerns only what “he judges should be willed.” So, in knowledge God can be said to be omniscient, and in power God can be said to be omnipotent, but in will God cannot be called “omnivolent.” God wills only those things that come to pass (I.vii.47). But, “In whatever God wills he is universally effectual; he is not hindered or frustrated in obtaining what he wills. For if he should properly will anything and not attain it he would not be wholly perfect and blessed” (I.vii.48).

This discussion might have lead some of his readers to conclude that the Puritan system was a form of hard necessity. Ames therefore insisted that the determinative will of God does not “imply a *necessity* in all future things, but only a *certainty* in regard to the event” (italics mine). Freedom is to be found in acting according to desire. Ames illustrates this freedom in the Bible: “thus the event was certain that Christ’s bones should not be broken, because God willed that they should not be. But there was no necessity imposed upon the soldiers, their spears, and other secondary causes then present” (I.vii.49). Although it was a certainty that Christ’s bones would not be broken before he was taken off the cross, “secondary causes” such as the will of the soldiers assured that the freedom was preserved. Clearly, Ames takes a “compatibilist” approach here, saying that freedom and divine determinism cohere. Indeed, so far from

determining all things with a “hard necessity,” the will of God is actually the “the prime root and efficient cause of all contingency and freedom in things, on the ground that it effectively foreordains certain effects to follow certain causes” (I.vii.50).

Creation

After having outlined in general terms the sufficiency and efficiency of God, which make God “the proper and adequate object of faith” (I.vii.54), and having already dichotomized the sufficiency of God into essence and subsistence, Ames then dichotomizes the efficiency of God into creation and providence (I.viii.1). Creation, encompassing, “whatever exists outside of God” (I.viii.5) is defined as “the efficiency of God whereby in the beginning out of nothing he made the world to be altogether good” (I.viii.2), emphasizing that this work of God was “out of nothing” (I.viii.9). Ames thought a subjectivity corresponded to the objectivity of the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. “God created all things out of nothing. Therefore our faith rests in him in hope against hope, expecting things which are not as if they were...” (I.viii.26). If God could create the universe through an act of omnipotent will, Ames thought the Christian should therefore trust God with his life.

Just as the glory of God is the end of God’s decrees, so to the glory of God is the end of the creation. More specifically, “God wanted to show both his perfection in his not needing any creature or outward thing...and his freedom in producing all things without natural necessity...” The phrase, “Natural necessity,” one that Jonathan Edwards would employ, is used to contrast the situation in which God would have *had to* create in a certain way. God’s glory is further sustained by the fact that “...no creature was or

could have been a cause, instrumental or principal, in the act of creation” (I.viii.16), once again ruling out human arrogance.

The creation was “very good” and everything was made teleologically, “for the end which the maker has before him” (I.viii.17). Indeed, Ames defines goodness in this teleological sense, “The goodness of a thing created is the perfection of its fitness for the use which it serves” (I.viii.18). This usefulness can be either “particular,” i.e., having to do with the usefulness an object has “in its own nature” (I.viii.19) or “universal,” having to do with how an object can be used alongside others “for the perfection of the universe” (I.viii.20). These created things in their goodness “naturally tend towards God from whom they came. For secondary being is from primary being and for primary being. Hence those phrases: *From him, through him, and to him are all things*, Rom 11:36” (I.viii.21). These created things tend toward God in two ways, “first, in that they declare God’s glory...second, in that they give occasion for us both to know and seek God...and third, in that they sustain our life that we may live well to God...” (I.viii.22). Clearly, the *telos* of all things was in Ames’s view inextricably God-centered.

Beyond the scope of this dissertation is Ames’s discussion of the angels, which are defined as “spirits of primary perfection created to minister to God” (I.viii.36), but it should be noted in passing that in Ames’s comments upon the excellencies of the angels, he spoke of their freedom of will, defined in a compatibilist manner:

The angels so excel in clear-seeing reason that they are said to be, as it were, full of eyes discerning immediately what God would have them do and how it is to be done. They excel in freedom of will so that they perform their offices with

diligence Ps. 103:20; in perfection of strength so that they are able to do deeds of surpassing power, 2 Peter 2:11; and also in the greatest agility... (I.viii.38).

Ames closes his discussion of creation with God's last creative act, humanity.

Human beings were the last of all creatures to be made because they are above the rest in the intention of God (I.viii.62). God's high purposes in creating man are evidenced by the fact that he created them "in a different manner from other creatures..." Specifically, non-humans and the rest of creation "were brought forth by a word only, *Let there be light*..., but man was brought forth, as it were, with greater counsel and deliberation, *Let us make man*, Gen. 1:26" (I.viii.63). The chief "excellency" of man is found in the fact that he uniquely "bore the image of God" (I.viii.65). In the "inferior creatures," there is "only a shadow and vestige" of the image of God, and therefore it is correct to say that the image of God "is not properly to be found" in them. Nevertheless, God denied humanity the status of being a perfect image bearer, reserving this status for the "son of God, Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3" (I.viii.68).

The topic of will arises once again in the context of man's creation as the *imago dei*, particularly as Ames discusses the "inward" manifestations of the image in humanity. The inward image of God "is the perfection of body and soul" (I.viii.71). Ames extols the body's "usefulness" (I.viii.73), but spends more time describing the "perfection of the soul" which "consisted in its immortal nature, seen not only in the faculties whereby it has freedom in its actions in the understanding and the will—but also in its endowment with gifts whereby man is rendered able and fit to live well, that is, in wisdom, holiness, and righteousness, Eph. 4:234; Col. 3:10" (I.viii.73). That the *imago dei* would include

understanding and will is clearly consistent with Ames's discussion of the sufficiency and efficiency of God.

Ames briefly comments upon the relation between the sexes:

The creation of man was male and female, both of them out of nothing as far as the soul is concerned. The body of the male was made out of the earth mixed with other elements and that of the woman out of the man and for the man so that nothing would be missing for his well-being, 1 Cor. 11:8,9. (I.viii.79)

Although female is portrayed as being "for the man," two things are particularly notable in this passage. First is the fact that Ames spend very little time on the topic, and second, Ames equates men and women in terms of their souls, which clearly is the more important consideration in Ames's thought. Both male and female were given the aforementioned "perfection of the soul," replete with "freedom in its actions— in the understanding and the will" (I.viii.73).

The Cosmos as Will: The Providence of God

In his discussion of the providence of God, which is "that efficiency whereby he provides for existing creatures in all things in accordance with the counsel of his will" (I.ix.1), Ames outlines a theology of universal, divine determinism, an all-encompassing understanding of the universe that relegates all events and all existence to the will of God. This expression of God's working power "extends to *all* things not only general but particular, Ps. 145:15; Prov. 16:9, 33; Exod 21:13." Since God is absolutely free, providence is not determined by any cause, but determines all causes..." Providence is "the universal and the particular cause of *all things*" (I.ix.2, emphasis mine), including human volition. To support the idea that God determines all events, he quotes, among

other biblical passages, Proverbs 16:33 and Proverbs 16:9. Proverbs 16:33 seems to address the determination of seemingly chance events, “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD,” where Proverbs 16:9 addresses human activity (including volition): “A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.”

It is not as if human activity is akin to a marionette, guided skillfully by the hands of a puppeteer. Nor is the will to be understood as a beast of burden ridden by God or Satan (cf. Fiering, 1981). Rather, the providence of God may be either “direct, whereby God, by himself, is “the sole cause” of things or events, or “indirect” whereby he provides through the use of means” (I.ix.3). These “means,” also known as “secondary causes,” actually “prevail” in “certain aspects of creation” (I.ix.5). The determination of human volition may be understood as one sphere in which “secondary causes prevail,” being “indirectly” determined through the means of human motivation, upbringing, and social context for example.

Ames argued that God’s use of secondary causes was an expression of the “abundance of his goodness” in that “he communicates a certain dignity of efficiency to his creatures...” (I.ix.6). Understood as a gift of God, efficiency (including volition) is derivative, not, as the language of the 18th century would have it, “inalienable.” The implication of this is that just as God may freely give efficiency to his creatures, he is also free to take it away.

Another reason God communicates his efficiency to the creature is in order to make “...his own efficiency more perceptible” (I.ix.6). Ames quotes 1 Sam. 14:6, in which Saul the friend of King David decides to raid a garrison of gentile soldiers with the

help of his armor bearer only. In the face of overwhelming odds, Jonathan said to his armor bearer, *"It is not impediment to the Lord whether he saves by many or by few,"* meaning that God's working power is greater than the efficiency of any garrison of soldiers, and that God could, if willing, provide the victory. Jonathan is, of course, rewarded for his faith. Ames is arguing that in this and many analogous examples from the Bible, God had determined to glorify himself through the expression of his own efficiency. Similarly, "...God often uses unlikely means to produce the most worthy effects, 1 Cor. 1:27, 28; Amos 9:5; 2 Chron. 24:24; and he often makes the most suitable means ineffectual, Ps. 33:16 and 127:1, 2; Hos. 4:10" (I.ix.6).

This discussion of human vs. divine efficiency provides a useful backdrop to the views of human volition that would emerge in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America from Enlightenment sources. It is widely recognized that the Enlightenment was (generally- see May, 1976) an "optimistic" movement that stressed human abilities while minimizing or ignoring theological considerations. Enlightenment discussion of human volition tended to characterize human efficiency as something possessed rather than received. To put the issue in Amesean language, the Enlightenment magnified the efficiency of man without recognizing the Communicator of all efficiency. And, rather than glorifying Efficiency, the Enlightenment extolled its own efficiency. If William Ames were alive today and given a chance to explain the loss of will in American psychology, one wonders if he might not have argued that Providence had, in response to Enlightenment hubris and ingratitude, ceased to "communicate...the dignity of efficiency" to his human subjects.

Thus, Puritan science had plenty of room for secondary causes... and so could find room for experiments concerning the properties of air in Robert Boyle, for example. Further, the ambiguity of scientific laws is also apparent in this context. Were Newton's laws secondary causes, such as the properties of air on water levels, or were these "laws" simply expressions of God's direct hand of providence, ordering things in an orderly way. Nevertheless, Ames was not averse to speaking of laws of nature. Making a distinction that further helps to elucidate and clarify Ames's understanding of providence, Ames argued that "the providence of God is either ordinary and usual, or extraordinary and unusual" (I.ix.8). Ordinary providence, has to do with the "order in natural things" which is "the law of nature." This providence "...arises from the force and efficacy of the never revoked word of God given in the beginning, *Let it be made, Let it be, Be it so...* By its force it affects all matters which are normally the result of natural things" (I.ix.10). By contrast, "Extraordinary providence" has to do with "God's provision for things beyond the usual and appointed order." In these cases, "whatever is effected is...called a miracle" (I.ix.11).

Finally, Ames dichotomized providence into conservational or governmental (I.ix.14). "Conservation is God's making all things, universal and particular, to persist and continue in essence and existence as well as in their powers, Ps. 104:19, 20; Acts 17:28; Heb. 1:3." This is suitably called by the Schoolmen, "God's holding in his hand," because by this power God sustains all things as if with his hand" (I.ix.15). If God failed to conserve the creation, "every creature would return to that state of nothing whence it came...the cessation of divine conservation would, without any other operation, immediately reduce every creature to nothing" (I.ix.17). The creature depends upon God

“in every way,” even for it’s “being, existence, continuance, and operation” (I.ix.17).

Given the fact that all existence is sustained by the efficiency of God’s providence just as all existence came into being through this same efficiency, Ames says that “conservation is nothing else than a continued creation. Neh 9:6, *Thou has made...and thou preservest all things*” (I.ix.18).

In this discussion, Ames’s theology touches upon fundamental assumptions about the nature of the cosmos— assumptions that were being hotly contested during the seventeenth century with the advent of the “Scientific Revolution” and the ascendancy of corpuscularian/atomistic and mechanistic views of the universe. In light of the doctrine of the conservation of creation by Providence, the radicalism of the new mechanistic view of the universe can be seen more clearly. The seemingly innocuous assertions of pious scientists such as Robert Boyle of the Royal Society that the universe was like a grand, finely tuned machine made by a wise Machine-Maker, portrayed the universe as having independent existence (see Shapin, 1996). Boyle’s clockmaker could very well have made the clock and stepped away from his creation. Indeed, many scientists took that viewpoint. In Ames’s scheme, however, even the continued *existence* of the clock would have to be considered radically dependent upon God’s efficiency. The new viewpoint tended to take the existence of the clock for granted.

Although certainly not the intention of many participants in the Scientific Revolution, the mechanistic thinking was therefore an intellectual demotion of God vis-à-vis the creation. This shift in thinking certainly had many implications. One implication (relevant to the history of volition in American psychology) is that the meaning of a deterministic universe changed. In the Puritan viewpoint, all things were determined by

an efficient but wise and loving God. In the modern viewpoint, all things were determined by a cold and impersonal machine, although perhaps a divinely designed machine. The implications of this difference are evident when we move from Ames to James. In view of the determination of all events by Providence, Ames found faith: “because the exercise of strength in creatures depends upon the will of God, it can be said that we trust in God alone and not in those creatures through which we derive the bounty of God” (I.ix.26). James, on the other hand, found the prospect of a deterministic, monistic universe horrifying. For this reason, we will find Ames and the Puritans arguing *for* a determined will, and James and other New Psychologists trying to find some free space in which the will may loose itself from the horrifying drone of the impersonal machine.

This conservation of all things provides the necessary backdrop for Ames’s discussion of “governmental” providence, “which is the power whereby God directs and leads all his creatures to their proper end” (I.ix.19). The need for conservation is clear enough; things need to be “continued and maintained” in order to be governed (I.ix.16). Given the continuous creation of God, Ames’s assertion that “the government of things is rightly God’s” seems unproblematic. Yet, Ames, who did not have to grapple with the power of mechanistic views of the cosmos (which would come into prominence after he wrote the Marrow), argued that “...things could never attain the ends for which they were created unless governed by the same power which created them. It is a failure in the worker to leave work that he has done to be directed by another” (I.ix.19).

If the doctrine of the conservation of all things by Providence contradicted the emergent mechanistic views of the universe, the doctrine of the government of all things

by Providence sounds in some ways very similar to these emergent views. In his discussion of “common government,” Ames takes up the topic of the orderliness of the creation. “Common government is God’s direction of all things in a similar manner.” This direction takes four forms. First is “the law of nature common to all things which is a participation of the divine law and will in all things from the very beginning. Job 38:12....Second a natural inclination or principle of working according to that law. Job 5:7...Third, a natural instinct or peculiar stirring up of living creatures to higher activities with a certain show or suggestion of reason. Prov. 6:6...and 30:24-28...Jer 8:7...Fourth, a certain power to obey whereby all creatures tend to obey the command of God. Ps. 103:21 and 148:8...” (I.ix.23). The scriptures he quotes all have to do with the orderliness and predicableness of the creation, according to God’s will.

The common government of God “shines forth in the operation of all things” (I.ix.24), particularly as individuals and societies seek their proper end and perfection. “Everything naturally looks toward an end; it is thus necessary that things be directed and governed by an intelligence which is everywhere present and omnipotent, i.e., by God himself....” And, “...alongside of the ordaining power whereby everything seeks its own perfection, all things cultivate a common society, as it were, and desire the preservation of the whole more than themselves (as seen in heavy things carried upward to fill a vacuum)” (I.ix.24). Ames seems to be using Aristotelian language here, invoking ideas similar to *entelechy*, or that everything has a purpose in itself. More relevant here is the assumption that purpose requires the government of God. This assumption would continue throughout the nineteenth century until it met the naturalistic challenge of evolutionary thinking: that design can exist without a designer.

All creation, including humans, is subject to the “common government” of God. But there is another kind of government “added to” (I.ix.3) common government of God that is instituted with the special needs and obligations of humans in mind. This is the special government of God. This special government “...is God’s government of rational creatures in a moral way” (I.x.1). Because human beings are uniquely created in the image of God, they, like God, are “in some way immortal, and decide their actions in accord with their own counsel,” and, unlike God, “...are to be directed towards an eternal state of happiness or unhappiness in accordance with their own freedom and counsel” (I.x.2). Human beings are not driven by instinct. Rather as possessors of the image of God, are to freely choose that likeness.

This special, moral government “consists of teaching and in carrying out what it has previously taught. Mic. 6:8, *He has shown you, O man, what is good*; Duet. 30:15, *Life and good, death and evil*.” This teaching is found in “the revealed will of God, which is the rule for the moral life” (I.x.4). More specifically, God governs by teaching in two ways, *making* and *establishing* laws (I.x.5). Laws are made “...by commanding and forbidding” (I.x.6), while laws are established “...by promising or threatening” (I.x.7). The government of God consists in carrying out what he has taught (I.x.8).

In this context, the crucial Puritan concept of *covenant* is introduced: “From this special way of governing rational creatures there arises a covenant between God and them.” This covenant is “a kind of transaction of God with the creature whereby God commands, promises, threatens, fulfills; and the creature binds itself in obedience to God so demanding...” (I.x.9). Clearly, given all that Ames has said about God prior to this point, this is not a covenant “between those who are equal...” but is rather a covenant

“between lord and servant” (I.x.10). The covenant’s promises and threatenings are happiness as the reward of obedience, and unhappiness the punishment for disobedience. Yet, preserving the utter autonomy of God, Ames quickly stipulates that only the punishment can be “deserved” by the creature (I.x.11). The dependency of humans in this covenant is manifest, for the expected happiness that flows from this covenant is “from someone else” not from the self (I.x.12). The covenant also gives rise to “...the force and reason of conscience which is an intelligent creature’s self-judgment in his subjection to God’s judgment” (I.x.13). I would briefly add that the covenant also made the concept of will intelligible, as I will argue below.

Ames argued that the special government applies to men and angels because both are “rational creatures” (I.x.14), but for the sake of brevity I will focus on the special government of humans. Ames argued that two things are particularly crucial in the special government of men, “...the prescribing of a law and the ordering of the event to follow” (I.x.25). The essence of this prescribed law is “summed up in the Decalogue” and it is “written in the heart” in “the form of disposition [*habitus*]...” (I.x.26). Unlike the angels, who stood or fell independently of one another, the covenant was made with Adam, who was “...the first of mankind, from whom all men come...” Therefore, “...a law was given to him not only as a private person, as among angels, but as a public person or the head of the family of man. His posterity were to derive all good and evil from him, Acts 17:26; Rom. 5:18, 19; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22” (I.x.30). If Adam obeyed this covenant, life would have been his reward. If he disobeyed, the consequence would be death. Ames summarized this arrangement thus, “...the law of God or his covenant with man in the creation was, *Do this and you will live; if you do it not you shall die*. In these

words there is, first, a command and then a promise—you do it and you shall live—and last a threat—if you do it not, you shall die” (I.x.32).

Adam failed to keep this covenant with God. In discussing this “fall,” Ames moves his discussion of the prescription of the law to a consideration of the “ordering of events.” “For man there are two things to be considered in the ordering of events...his fall and his restoration, Rom. 5:19, 1 Cor. 15:21” (I.xi.1). Because Adam was the covenant representative of humanity, “all mankind perished” in his fall (I.xi.3). This “fall” was “*from* the obedience owed to God” (I.xi.4, italics mine) through the covenant of works. Adam transgressed the “...law ordained by God” (I.xi.4), specifically by eating the forbidden fruit, but “the first motion” of this sin “...came before the act of eating, so that it may truly be said that man was a sinner before he did the eating” (I.xi.6). This “first motion” was “the disordered desire for some superiority due to pride of mind.” Following the suggestion of the serpent, Eve ate the fruit to gain superiority (I.xi.7), and thereby manifested “contempt for the whole covenant” (I.xi.8).

Explaining how God’s greatest creation, i.e., humanity, could act in an evil way has always been one of the most difficult problems of Christian theology. How could Adam and Eve, created, as the Westminster Shorter Catechism would have it, “in knowledge, righteousness and holiness” act in such ignorance, unrighteousness, and unholiness? Arendt (1978) argued that Augustine “discovered” the faculty of the will, and it was precisely in his struggle over the issue of the origin of evil that he made this discovery. Ames, following this tradition, argued that the “principal cause” of the fall “was man himself in his abuse of free will, Eccles. 7:29.” Adam had “...received righteousness and grace by which he might have remained obedient, if he had so chosen.”

To defend God from the charge of unrighteously causing the fall, Ames insists that this righteousness and grace were “...not taken from him before he sinned...” qualifying that the “...strengthening and confirming grace by which the act of sinning might have been hindered and the act of obedience effected was not given him—and that by the certain, wise, and just counsel of God.” The charge of “...lay[ing] upon man the necessity of sinning” was also out of bounds because “man of his own accord freely fell from God” (I.xi.11). Implied in this statement is a compatibilist understanding of freedom, i.e., that freedom sufficient for responsibility is found in liberty from constraint. Arminianism and other challenges to Calvinism would sharply challenge these contentions. Edwards would defend the rationality of these formulations in his Freedom of the Will.

The Loss of Will as a Consequence of Adam’s Sin

Ames argued that there are two consequences of this sin of Adam, first, “guilt and the sense of wickedness,” and second, “punishment” (I.xii.1). “Guilt is the obligation of the sinner to undergo just punishment for his fault...” (I.xii.2), and is accompanied by a “gnawing conscience...accusing and justly condemning. And then comes a horror and a fleeing from the presence of God...” (I.xii.6). The sense of wickedness “...is that spiritual pollution whereby a sinner is made destitute of all dignity and honor and becomes vile...” (I.xii.7), and “remains in the sinner after the act” (I.xii.8), and is, “...often called the spot of sin, corruption, defilement...” (I.xii.8). Because of this sense of wickedness, sinners turn away from God and experience shame (I.xii.9). In several ways, then, the fall affected the prevailing inclinations of the human will.

Punishment, which “...is an evil inflicted on the sinner for his sin” (I.xii.10), is “...called an evil because it is a deprivation...of the good of happiness...” (I.xii.11). The

curses of the covenant of works come into view in the consideration of punishment, which is inflicted “...because it had been prohibited...” (I.xii.13). Interestingly, Ames found in the punishment of sin an assertion of the dignity of human beings: “...punishment, properly speaking, has no place but in intelligent creatures in whom there is also sin” (I.xii.14).

Consistent with God’s desire to manifest his glory, the “ordaining of punishment” allows “...many attributes of God shine forth, especially holiness, righteousness, and mercy” (I.xii.17); Ames therefore carefully explicates the perfections of God manifest in the punishment of sinners.

After having discussed these general characteristics of punishment, Ames examines the specificities of the punishment inflicted on mankind for Adam’s sin. Simply put, “the punishment inflicted on man for sin is death...” (I.xii.28), and death, in turn, is generally defined as “...a miserable deprivation of life” (I.xii.29). Ames thought of life as not only the union of body and soul, but also “...all the perfection which belonged to man in that [original] state, whether actually communicated or to be communicated upon a condition...” (I.xii.30). Deprived of this perfection through death, sinners experience God’s “vengeance on sin” (I.xii.31), and “...subjection to misery” (I.xii.32).

The story then becomes a bit more complex. First, there are “two degrees” of death: “the beginning,” which has to do with death as experienced in this life, and “the consummation,” which has to do with the end of the world. Likewise, there are “two parts” of death, first, “the punishment which is loss [*damnum*]” which has to do with “deprivation,” and, second, “...the punishment which is a matter of consciousness

[*sensus*]" which can be considered the "positive" aspect of death. Finally, death has both "spiritual and bodily" manifestations (I.xii.34). Ames then sets out to explore each of the permutations that these divisions suggest.

The actual loss (as opposed to the consciousness) associated with the beginning (as opposed to the consummation) of spiritual (as opposed to bodily) death "...is the defacement of the image of God, i.e., the letting go of grace and original justice. Rom 3:23...Eph. 4:18..." (I.xii.35), which in turn robs humanity of "all saving gifts," and weakens, wounds and puts human nature "out of order" (I.xii.36). In terms of conscious realization, the beginning of spiritual death takes the form of "spiritual bondage" (I.xii.37), defined as "a subjection to the power of darkness or of spiritually deadly enemies..." (I.xii.38). More specifically, "this bondage is of the devil" (I.xii.39; which consists of "subjection" to the devil's power, I.xii.40), and of those who serve him (I.xii.39), which is "bondage to the world and to sin" (I.xii.41). This bondage to the world "...is subjection to the evil incitements found in the world..." (I.xii.42), and the bondage to sin "...consists in man's being so captivated by sin that he has no power to rise out of it, Rom. 6:16, 17, 19, 20" (I.xii.43). In sum, "spiritual death" is nothing less than the bondage of the human will to evil. The human will, so "captivated" by sin, is deprived of even the inclination to escape from its fallen misery.

Ames's discussion of this bondage of the will to sin further reveals his understanding of freedom. "Although the freedom of the will essential to man's nature remains, this bondage destroys the freedom which belongs to the perfection of human nature and includes the power to perform acts spiritually good and acceptable—or at least the bondage leaves that freedom remote and dead" (I.xii.44). Implied in this statement is

that there are *two kinds* of freedom relevant to the question of human liberty. There is a freedom which is “essential to man’s nature,” which has to do with freedom from constraint. This freedom was not lost during the fall. There is also a freedom that “belongs to the perfection of human nature,” which has to do with possessing “power” to obey God’s commands. Adam’s fall into the “bondage of sin” therefore included the loss of freedom of will in this second sense. It was, in essence, a loss of the will to do good. Nevertheless, Adam retained the freedom to act as he would, although these acts were necessarily conditioned by his captivity to sin, resulting in “a multiplication of sin in this present life” (I.xii.45), which was actually a part of Adam’s punishment (I.xii.46).

Ames, expanding upon this “multiplication of sin,” makes a further distinction between “original” and “actual” sin (I.xiii.1). “Original sin,” Ames defined as “...a habitual deviation of the whole nature of man, or a turning aside from the law of God” (I.xiii.2). This “corruption” is in scripture:

“...attributed not only to the whole man in general but to each one of his parts. It is attributed to the intellect, as found in Gen. 6:5, *The imagination and thoughts only evil*; Rom. 8:5-7, *They savor the things of the flesh*. To the conscience in Titus 1:15, *The mind and conscience is defiled*. To the will in Gen. 8:21, *The imagination of the heart of man is evil from his childhood*. To affections of every kind in Rom. 1:24, *To uncleanness in the lusts of their hearts*. Last, to the body and all its members as in Rom. 6:19, *Your members yielded to uncleanness and iniquity do commit iniquity*.” (I.xiii.4)

The “perversion” of original sin, which includes a “habitual lack of obedience,” (I.xiii.5), has two parts, formal and material. “The formal part is an aversion to good...” (I.xiii.8),

while “the material part is a turning and inclining towards evil...” (I.xiii.9). Ames here makes explicit what was before implicit: because of the “corruption” of original sin, man’s will “is captive and servile in its way of performing [its actions]. The will is deprived of the power of willing well and takes the form of willing amiss even when the object of the willing is good, Rom. 3:12, 7:14; 2 Cor. 3:5; John 8:34” (I.xiii.10). Nevertheless, the will is still “free in the actions it performs.”

Moving from original to actual sin, Ames defines actual sin as “a deviation of human action or turning aside from the law of God, 1 John 3:4” (I.xiv.1). It follows from original sin as an act follows a habit, or as a person’s misdeed flows from a fault of his nature. In this respect original sin is rightly called the tinder for sin” (I.xiv.2). Although actual sins may be opposed to one another and have different objects, they “are tied and knit together at the point of their beginning or foundation...” (I.xiv.3). Ames dissects sin, arguing that individual sins differ “in the matter of degree,” (I.xiv.4), but, since the “differences in actual sins are relative...” (I.xiv.6), sins should be divided according to the commandments they violate (I.xiv.7). He divides actual sin into “sins of omission and those of commission” (I.xiv.8). Sins may also be divided according to their object, be it God or man (I.xiv.14), and according to their effect (I.xiv.15). More to the point of this dissertation, however, is the division of sin “...according to its subject into sin of the heart, sin of the mouth, and sin of work. Thus it may be a word, a deed, or a thought directed against the law...” (I.xiv.13). The notion of “sin of the heart” pervades Puritan thought, and undergirds the primacy of the interior life.

As sin multiplies, there is an “...increase in spiritual death both in the form of loss and in the form of conscious realization” (I.xiv.16). Regarding loss, “...there is a secure

feeling and a stupidity, i.e., a lack of the sense of sin and misery” (I.xiv.17), and regarding conscious realization, there is a sense of terror” (I.xiv.19), which comes from both guilt and impending punishment (I.xiv.20). Yet, in the beginning of this spiritual death, “...God imparts a certain moderation, which is either internal or external” (I.xiv.21). Internally, there remain “vestiges of God’s image, Jas. 3:9,” which “...appear both in the understanding and the will” (I.xiv.22). The understanding retains “...the principles of truth which direct both the theoretical and the practical judgment” (I.xiv.23). The “theoretical principles” have to do with judgments of truth or falsity, “...which all men who have any use of reason have some knowledge...” (I.xiv.24), and the “practical principles” have more to do with moral judgments, i.e., distinguishing “...between honest and dishonest, just and unjust—that God is to be worshipped, or that something is not to be done to another which one would not have done to oneself” (I.xiv.25). These vestiges of God’s image give rise to “...a certain force of natural conscience, Rom. 2:15, *Their consciences together bearing witness and their thoughts accusing one another or excusing*. But this conscience, was well as the principles, is corrupt and even dead. Titus 1:15, *Their mind and conscience is defiled*” (I.xiv.27).

The vestiges of the image of God in humanity also influence the will. Human beings still possess “...a certain inclination to dimly known good.” This inclination is “vanishing and dead,” but all humans possess it “to some degree.” The scripture therefore sometimes asserts that there are “shadows of virtue” which “...are approved and cultivated by all. 2 Tim. 3:5, *Having a show of godliness*” (I.xiv.28). Further, this “restraining power” of God unleashed on the will and understanding also helps to curb excessive sin, “...so that even sinners abhor the committing of many grosser sins. 1 Cor.

5:1, *Such fornication is not found among the Gentiles*” (I.xiv.29). God restrains sins through “...external means, both social and domestic, through which the course of sin and misery can be partly arrested” (I.xiv.30).

So much for spiritual death. Adam’s fall also brought about “bodily death,” which results initially in both inward and outward loss. Inwardly, this loss is of “...the internal good things of the body, that is, heath and vigor...” (I.xv.2), while outwardly the beginning of bodily death consists in “...the passing of the outward good things whereby life is either enhanced or sustained” (I.xv.5), which would include “poverty...loss of...food, raiment, and possessions...” (I.xv.7). In terms of conscious realization, the beginning of bodily death consists in inward manifestations, such as “weariness...pain, and disease...” (I.xv.9), and outward manifestation, “all those calamities to which the outer life of man is subject...” (I.xv.10). Yet, just as spiritual death was moderated by God, so too God moderates the inward death of the body by giving a “due measure of life granted...by the goodness of God...” inwardly (I.xv.12), and, outwardly, “vestiges of the old dominion over the creatures...” Because of Adam’s sin, man lost “...all prior rights of using the creatures to his benefit,” yet God in “divine indulgence” allows humans to continue in their use of the creation. Therefore, humanity does not sin in using the creation, “although he may sin in the manner of use” (I.xv.13).

This bleak picture grows bleaker as Ames finally discusses the “highest degree of punishment,” which is found in “the consummation of death,” which “...endures forever, and is thus said to be infinite in degree” (I.xvi.1). The consummation of death includes the “...losing of an infinite good...” (I.xvi.2), although there are “degrees” of this punishment and loss (I.xvi.3). The duration of this punishment is infinite (I.xvi.4), and

can be considered from the point of view of loss and conscious awareness, as was the case when considering the “beginning” of death. In terms of loss, the consummation of spiritual death “...is total and final forsaking by which a man is separated completely from the face, presence, and favor of God...” (I.xvi.7), and in terms of conscious awareness, the consummation is found in “...a full sense of bondage to the power of the devil, to which a man is totally delivered, Matt. 25:41” (I.xvi.9). Included in this bondage to the devil is the impossibility of repentance: “...the lost sin and will sin forever...” (I.xvi.10), and, since all sinners in this life experience the restraint of God, Ames can say that “...the sins of the lost have in them more of punishment than the sins of the living” (I.xvi.11). All of this implicates the will. Since the lost are forever given to bondage to the devil, their wills are forever enslaved. Never again will God mercifully moderate evil inclination. The lost will forever hate God in hell. This hatred will be without constraint, and so free in one sense, but, lacking power to repent, the damned lack freedom in another sense. Clearly, the drama of hell undergirded the crucial status of volition in Puritan psychology.

Ames closed his sobering discussion of human sin with a consideration of sin’s “propagation,” or the “...participation in the condition of Adam by all human posterity descended from him in a natural manner, Job 14:5; Ps. 51:7; Rom. 5:14; Eph. 2:3.” The thought that all humanity is guilty in Adam’s sin was and would be a source of great controversy, and Ames immediately attempts to demonstrate the “justice of it.” The justice of the propagation is found in three factors:

First, in natural law by which inbred qualities are passed on from parents to children; second, in hereditary law by which the burdens of parents are transferred

to children; third, in the law of like-for-like by which the rejection of good and the enduring of evil are balanced. (I.xvii.1)

The main source for this difficult doctrine was the Scripture itself. Ames quoted, among other things, Romans 5:14, which teaches that “...death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.” Given that the Puritans have been cited as a main source of American individualism (Berkovitch), this teaching concerning the propagation of sin is an interesting counter-example. If this doctrine teaches anything, it is that humanity shares a common tragic past, and must deal with this shared heritage.

Outlining concepts that are foundational for the “application of Christ” discussed in the next section of the Marrow, Ames argued that “the propagation of sin has two parts, imputation and real communication” (I.xvii.2). “Imputation means that the individual act of disobedience which was Adam’s becomes ours also” (I.xvii.3), while “real communication means that the individual sin, although not ours, is like ours in meaning and nature” (I.xvii.4). Reiterating much of what he said in the context of original sin, Ames argued that the deprivation of original righteousness that followed Adam’s first sin (i.e., original sin), has had grave consequences on, among other things, the will. The deprivation of original righteousness leads to a grave “defect” in the faculties of the soul, such that “any moral situation” is accompanied by “morally evil” inclination (I.xvii.8). “Out of this condition [of depravity of original righteousness] arises each actual sin, for the mind blinded by the deprivation of light easily admits errors. And the will being now turned from God and without God burns with love of

itself and evil desire” (I.xvii.9). From this propagation of sin, the aforementioned bodily and spiritual death in all its manifestations arises (I.xvii.10).

Using this stark picture of human sinfulness and divine wrath as background, Ames prepares his readers for the all-important transition to the topic of salvation. Now, because of sin, humans must trust in God not only for life but also salvation. Turning to the book of Ephesians, Ames summarized the human condition: “dead in sins, Eph. 2:1.” Hinting at the secret of deliverance from this dead condition, Ames concluded this part of the Marrow calling attention to the “...one difference between the question of the rich young man, Matt. 19:16, *What good shall I do that I may have eternal life?* and that of the jailer, Acts 16:30, *What must I do to be saved?*” (I.xvii.11). Implied in this hint is that the jailer recognized that he was a “man dead in sins,” but the rich young man thought that he could do some good. For Ames, the jailer was closer to redemption.

Summary and Conclusion

Ames taught that the “first and proper subject of theology is the will” (I.i.9). The “objectivities” of the Puritan story concerning God, sin and salvation called for a particular subjectivity. This subjectivity *was* the will, and the Puritan was always concerned that the sinner’s will be properly conformed to the will of God. Therefore, the objectivities of the Puritan story were not meant to remain purely theoretical, but, instead, were meant to be life-transforming. For the Puritan, it was worse to know the truth and fail to respond, than to simply not know the truth at all.

The most basic proper response one can offer toward God is faith. Yet even this faith is a gift. Continually throughout the Marrow we are reminded that God is the source of all good, even the good that is found in human beings. The faith that God

requires is at its most essential level an act of will, as opposed to a merely intellectual endeavor.

Ames goes to great length to define the “object” of faith, God. The clear and intricate description of the Divine Object stands in stark contrast to the increasingly diffusive object of will that would be articulated in the nineteenth century. The Puritan God is the fountain and source of life itself. Humanity is therefore absolutely dependent upon God for this life. Ames’s explication of the attributes of God similarly reveal the comparatively humble position of humanity, yet also show the glory of God (which is the purpose of the Universe). As we shall see, the weakness and contingency of human nature became less evident to Protestant mental philosophers strongly influenced by the Enlightenment (such as Upham), but, became increasingly clear to members of the New Psychology at the close of the nineteenth century. Ironically, then, we sometimes find that the Puritan psychology actually had more in common with the emergent “secular” New Psychology than it did with the un-Puritan but Protestant antebellum mental philosophy.

Human will finds its ontological basis in God, who possess faculties of intellect and will. The will of God is most vividly portrayed in Ames’s portrayal of the “efficiency” or “working power” of God, which is “...that by which he works all things in all things” (I.vi.1). God’s will is dependent upon nothing, his purposes are never thwarted. Once again, the chasm between God and humanity is accentuated.

God’s will is the first cause of all events, including human volitions. Still, Ames insisted that this does not imply “necessity” because the sinful or virtuous humans of humanity are always done freely, without compulsion.

God freely created the world, and so the world has purpose. The “excellency” of humanity is that they are made in God’s image. We learn that God’s providence, which is “that efficiency whereby he provides for existing creatures in all things in accordance with the counsel of his will” (I.ix.1), provides a foundation for the orderliness of the created order. He determines some things through secondary causes, as opposed to making all activities the result of his direct intervention. He warms the earth through the sun, for example. And human actions are determined through motives, inclinations, etc. Secondary causes, including the will, flow from the “abundance of his goodness” in that “he communicates a certain dignity of efficiency to his creatures...” (I.ix.6). This communication not only blesses the creature but also makes “...his own efficiency more perceptible” (I.ix.6). Herein lies perhaps the crucial difference between Puritan and Arminian/Enlightenment psychologies. Only the former *unambiguously* affirmed that human efficiency is derived. Arminianism was only interested in an efficiency that would submit to the ultimacy of the human will. The Enlightenment was not interested in communicated efficiency at all. Yet, the Puritan psychologist would say, the alternative to communicated efficiency is no efficiency at all.

Ames closes this section of the Marrow with a consideration of the fall of Adam, and the consequences of that fall. God had made a covenant Adam, promising blessings for obedience, curse for disobedience. The covenant was made “not only for himself” but for all his posterity, i.e., for all of humanity. Adam fell by abusing the freedom that was given to him by God. Ames delves deeply into the dire consequences of Adams fall. Among these consequences is what we might call a loss of will, the loss of the original tendency of human beings to love, trust, and obey God. Still, since human beings are not

forced to do evil, they remain culpable. In this life, God exercises restraining power keeping humanity from becoming as bad as it possibly can. At the end of time, however, the wicked will be judged and forever damned, the possibility of loving God forever lost to their wills. Yet the Puritan remained hopeful, for God had elected some to everlasting life. Ames therefore turned next to “open” the drama of redemption to his hearers.

CHAPTER II

THE RESTORATION OF EFFICIENCY

“After the fall of man, we next consider his restoration” (I.xviii). Thus Ames begins the eighteenth chapter of The Marrow of Theology on a simple note. Likewise, the second chapter of this dissertation is a commentary on the remaining two-thirds of Book One in Ames’s The Marrow of Theology, in which Ames describes how Efficiency restores the efficiency lost to God’s elect. Consistent with Puritan impulses, the plan of salvation described herein was thought to glorify God. The center of this plan was Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who took flesh to redeem God’s elect. Ames describes in detail the purposes of Christ’s earthly ministry, the benefits Christ’s work brought to the elect, and how these benefits were actually applied to the elect. The story is detailed and thoroughly “sectarian,” even down to the details regarding *how* the story was to be administered in day-to-day churchly life.

The Restoration of Humanity

With the fall of man in place, Ames turned to expound the restoration of man. This restoration, which is “...the lifting from a state of sin and death to a state of grace and life,” (I.xviii.1) finds its origin in the merciful purposes and effectual will of God, “Eph. 1:9, 10, *He had made known to us...the mystery of his will, according to his free good will which he had foreordained in himself that in the full dispensation of those times before ordained, he might summarily gather together all things in Christ*” (I.xviii.4). By contrast, given the seriousness of sin and misery, the human will is impotent to construct

a way of recovery: “there was nothing in man which could provide any power to effect this restoration.” Given the bondage of the will to wickedness, just the opposite is true: “there was rather much that made to the contrary...” (I.xviii.2).

The restoration of sinners to God has two grand parts, “redemption” and “its application.” Roughly speaking, redemption takes place outside of the believer, and application takes place within the believer. In order to fully explain the internal transformation of the believer (which has to do with the *application* of redemption), it is necessary first to consider redemption itself. Further, since one way to define will is as the subjectivity that corresponds to the objectivities of the gospel, it is arguably important to consider these objectivities. Yet, as I stated in the introduction, one of the goals of this detailed explication is simply to show the richness of the Puritan story.

Just as God is understood as sufficiency and efficiency, so too the parts of redemption correspond to these attributes (I.xviii.3). And, just as the sufficiency and efficiency of God are inseparable, so too are the parts of salvation “of one and the same compass. For the end of redemption is its application...” (I.xvii.4). Because the redemption accomplishes all that it is designed to accomplish, the salvation of the elect is sure, “According to Christ’s word in John 6:37, *Whatever the father gives me shall come to me*” (I.xviii.5).

The Foundation of Restoration: The Mediator

Just as the most crushing effect of the fall was on man’s will, so too redemption is designed with the restoration of the human will in mind: “redemption is establishing man in freedom from the bondage of sin and the devil by the payment of a just price...” (I.xviii.6). This price “could not be paid by man” and “required the work of a mediator to

intercede between God and man making a perfect reconciliation between them...”

(I.xviii.8). And, just as the one Adam who lived in only one age but whose life influenced many, the mediator, who is “...Jesus Christ alone. Acts 4:12” (I.xviii.10), was “given only for one age...” only (I.xviii.9), but his life influences people in all ages.

At this point, Ames entered into a detailed description of the mediator. Although some of the things to follow do not bear *directly* upon the topic of the will, Ames thought that the “person”, “offices”, “satisfaction”, “humiliation”, and “exaltation” of Christ were all prerequisite to the transformation of the Adamic will. I will therefore briefly summarize these teachings here.

The Person of Christ

Ames first detailed Christ’s “fitness” to perform the work of a mediator, which consists of “his person and the office imposed upon his person” (I.xviii.12). Here Ames rehearses the orthodox view of the hypostatic union of the distinct divine and human natures in Christ:

The distinct natures [of Christ] are the divine nature...and the human, which is similar to ours in all ways (except sin and the mode of subsistence)...The distinction between the two natures holds because they remain absolutely the same in essence and essential properties as they were before they were joined.

Therefore the deity in Christ is neither changed, mixed, or in any way confused with the humanity nor the humanity with the deity. (I.xviii.14)

Although this union adds nothing to the divine nature, yet, “...in the human nature it effects a change whereby that nature is elevated to highest perfection...” (I.xviii.17). The perfection of the human nature includes human mind. But this psychology is, to say the

least, unique. Using biblical fenceposts as a guide, Ames described the mysterious psychology of the savior:

There were in Christ two kinds of understanding: a divine understanding whereby he knew all things, John 21:17, and a human, whereby he did not yet know some things, Mark 13:32. So there were two wills, one divine, Luke 5:13, and the other human, with a natural appetite, Matt. 26:39. So Christ has a double presence, but the human presence [retaining the true nature of humanity] cannot be everywhere or in many places at once. (I.xviii.27)

Though the Adamic will and understanding are now depraved, humanity now has hope for restoration because the will and understanding of Christ represent the “highest perfection” possible in a human. This perfection of Christ means nothing less than the possibility of the restoration of life to the spiritually dead. Ames, always eager to draw the practical subjective application says, “because God-in-Christ...has restored life to us, our faith is carried towards Christ” (I.xviii.28).

The Offices of Christ

In order to secure the salvation of the elect, Christ, from all eternity, entered into a “special covenant” (I.xix.4) with God to take three “offices” which were “...that of prophet, priest, and king” (I.xix.10). These three offices, which portray Christ as the fulfillment of the three main Old Testament figures, pertain to specific deficiencies in humanity which resulted from the fall. The office of prophet deals with “ignorance,” the office of priest deals with “alienation from God,” and the office of king deals with “powerlessness to return to him” (I.xix.11). Since the third office has most to do with volition, I will quickly dispense with the offices of prophet and priest, although these are

crucial in the Puritan mind. As a prophet, Christ brings “...revelation of the whole will of God, which brings salvation...” (I.xix.14). As a priest, Christ dies on the cross, “...expiating...the sins of men by sacrifice, and obtaining God’s favor for them, Col. 1:20, 22; 2 Cor. 5:15; Rom. 5:10” (I.xix.17).

It is the kingship of Christ that deals most closely with the will. The kingship of Christ, which is “...his power to dispense and administer all things pertaining to the salvation of man with force and authority, Ps. 2:6; Dan. 2:44; Luke 4:36” (I.xix.21), “...holds sway in the very souls and consciences of men, Rom. 14:17” (I.xix.23). The kingship of Christ deals with “...the government of the souls and consciences of men...” which is clearly “...not possible for a mere man” (I.xix.30). The government of the human soul, as noted above, is primarily through the human will.

Although this kingship pertains most closely with the regeneration of the human will, the first two offices are prerequisite to this regeneration because “...the order in which salvation is brought...” corresponds to the order of the offices. The gospel “...must first be preached, then obtained, and afterward applied. The first is the role of the prophet, the second of the priest, and the third of the king” (I.xix.12). Although Ames is certainly a voluntarist in his understanding of volitional processes, here again we find the idea that the understanding is always involved in volition.

Christ’s Humiliation

The redemption effected by Christ has “two parts...the humiliation of Christ as our mediator, and his exaltation” (I.xx.1). Both of these “estates” of Christ were prerequisite to rescuing poor sinners unable to obey God, and were carried out primarily to satisfy and demonstrate the justice of God. In essence, Christ was humiliated *in the*

place of the elect—who deserved the humiliation. Yet no human being could be
humiliated like Christ, because only Christ is God. Given Christ’s divine nature, his
humiliation consisted in “...his subjection to the justice of God in order to perform those
things necessary for the redemption of man...” (I.xx.2), the first of which was taking the
form of “...a servant which accompanied the taking of human nature,” existing “...in a
form which was void of all glory and divine majesty.” The divine majesty was
suppressed and hidden during the time of humiliation. By undergoing the further
humiliation of the cross, Christ achieved “satisfaction” appeasing “...the honor of God as
a kind of recompense for the injury done to him by our sins...Satisfaction takes away
condemnation, Rom. 8:34, and finally brings with it reconciliation to salvation, Rom.
*5:10” (I.xx.6). Because of his crucifixion, Jesus is called “an *Offering and sacrifice for**
**our sins*. Eph. 5:2” (I.xx.10). The humiliation of Christ also included an “achievement of*
*merit” for the elect. He “procured righteousness for us by obedience. Rom. 5:19, *Many**
**are made righteous (according to the favor of God)...*” (I.xx.12). In sum, “the whole*
*mystery depends on this: Christ is such a mediator as to become also our *surety*, Heb.*
7:22.” Just as Adam is “the common beginning” for all who are “created and lost,”
Christ is “...the common beginning for those who are to be redeemed...Rom. 5:16-18; 1
Cor. 15:22” (I.xx.11). Christ’s sacrifice perfectly satisfied “...all standards of justice,”
and this work is graciously “...accepted in our name and for our good” (I.xx.16).
Therefore, “...the greatest justice and the greatest grace are manifested together and
together work in man’s redemption...” (I.xx.17).

The humiliation of Christ is also found in his life and his death (I.xxi.1). In his
 conception, the efficacy and initiative of God’s will is once again contrasted with

humanity's weakness and passivity: "In his conception two principles worked together, one active and the other passive" (I.xxi.3). The passive principle "...was the blessed virgin Mary...", not because Mary "did nothing in the process of bringing forth Christ," but rather "...because she did nothing of herself—except to provide the material out of which the body of Christ was formed..." (I.xxi.4). "The active principle of the conception," on the other hand, was of God, specifically the Holy Spirit (I.xxi.5). Ames recounts the "private and public" life of Christ (I.xxi.12), specifically how "Christ...[both privately and publicly] subjected himself not only to the eternal and moral law, but also to the ceremonial and other laws of God." (I.xxi.16). Christ's obedience to the law "...was part of the humiliation, satisfaction, and achievement of merit which God demanded and received from him for us" (I.xxi.24). It was specifically his public life that was an "...open manifestation of himself to be the messiah" (I.xxi.30), and it was specifically the conclusion of this public life that was most crucial to the regeneration of the will of human beings.

Christ's death was his "...last act of his humiliation..." and involved "...extreme, horrible, and most acute pain for the sins of men" (I.xxii.1). Although Christ appeared very weak during his execution, Christ was active: "it was an act of Christ, and not a mere matter of enduring..." Christ's will was also fully involved: "...it was also voluntary and not compelled." Given that Christ willingly suffered "out of obedience to his father and love for us," Ames concludes that "the act arose out of power and not merely out of weakness..." (I.xxii.2). The power of Christ in the event is also manifest in that his suffering "...contained the greatest punishment because it equaled all the misery which the sins of men deserved" (I.xxii.3).

Ames closes his discussion of the humiliation of Christ with his death, which “...was the consummation of all humiliation. It was by far the greatest part of that humiliation” (I.xxii.5). Just as humanity through Adam underwent spiritual and bodily death in terms of “loss” and “conscious realization,” so too did Christ, both at the “beginning” (during his suffering on the cross) and the “consummation” (the point he actually died) of the process. With his typical methodical thoroughness, Ames recounts each permutation (e.g., the beginning of spiritual death by way of loss, the consummation of bodily death by way of conscious realization, etc.).

Christ’s Exaltation

After completing the first part of redemption, humiliation, Ames then moves to the second part, exaltation (see I.xx.1). “The exaltation of Christ is his glorious triumph over his and over our enemies” (I.xxiii.1). Although dead for three days, Christ “...overcame death...” and the devil, by “taking the prey out of his hands” (I.xxiii.2). Christ’s exaltation is the “crown and manifestation of this victory” over death and Satan (I.xxiii.3). In this exaltation, Christ was changed “...from the humble form of a servant and the attendant abject condition into a state of blessedness altogether heavenly...” (I.xxiii.5). Since the divine nature of Christ could not be improved upon, his human nature was subject to the most dramatic changes, receiving “...all the perfections possible for created nature.” Christ’s soul was filled with “complete fullness of wisdom and grace,” and “his body also was beautified...” (I.xxiii.7), yet he remained fully human: “...the exalted soul of Christ retained the nature of a soul, [and] the glorified body did not relinquish the essence and essential properties of a body” (I.xxiii.8). Just as there were three degrees of Christ’s extreme humiliation, there also were three degrees of exaltation:

his resurrection, ascension, and his sitting at the right hand of God (I.xxiii.9). Most relevant to the topic of will is Christ's resurrection:

Christ's resurrection pertained to his whole human nature which had fallen by death. For the soul it was a resurrection from hell or from the state and dominion of death to which the soul, so far as it was a part of the human nature, was subject.

For the body it was a resurrection from the dead and from the grave. (I.xxiii.10)

Although "the soul cannot be said to have risen again...this can be said of the body and human nature." Through this resurrection, "The body and the man actually recovered their perfection, but the soul recovered the ability to act and move perfectly in the body" (I.xxiii.11). This new ability relates to one of the purposes of the resurrection, which was "...that he might be the substance, example, and beginning of our spiritual and bodily resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:20, 21, 23, *He is made the first fruits of them that slept...in Christ shall all be made alive*" (I.xxiii.16). So, in some way, Christ's resurrected soul and body become the believer's resurrected soul and body. "For Christ as God is absolutely and in principle the cause of our resurrection. As he made satisfaction by his humiliation and death, he is the meritorious cause, but as he rose from the dead he is the exemplary cause and also a demonstration and a beginning for us" (I.xxiii.17). He expounds on this theme when dealing with the "application" of Christ to the believer.

The second degree of exaltation is: "The ascending of Christ into heaven...by which he leaves the earth and ascends to the highest heaven as to a throne of glory. Acts 1:11...Eph. 4:10..." (I.xxiii.18). This, too, applies to the renewal of human nature. "The ascension most properly applies to the human nature because it involved a change from a lower place to higher" (I.xxiii.19). The ascension of Christ is also particularly relevant to

human volition because, in the ascended state, Christ is endowed with kingly glory: “The highest glory with which Christ is endowed in this state is properly and formally a kingly glory. Acts 2:36, *Let therefore all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made this man Lord.*” (I.xxiii.28). Just as the kingship of Christ deals with “...the government of the souls and consciences of men...” (I.xix.30), so this exalted kingly glory of Christ “...is the fullness of power and majesty whereby he governs all things for the good of his own...” (I.xxiii.29). This government, as we shall see, includes the wills of “his own.”

Restoration Effected: The Application of Christ

The benefits of Christ’s humiliation and exaltation become real to the believer through the “application of Christ,” which is “...the making effectual, in certain men, of all those things which Christ has done and does as mediator” (I.xxiv.1). Like all things in human history, God’s will and decree is the determining factor in the application of Christ (I.xxiv.2). God gave the elect to Christ and Christ to the elect before creation. (I.xxiv.3; I.xxiv.8), and it is through Christ that all saving benefits accrue to the believer: “All saving things are said to be communicated to us *In Christ*, as in the head, *Because of Christ*, as obtained by his merit, and *Through Christ*, as the one through whom they are effectually applied...” (I.xxiv.6). The certainty of the application of Christ to the elect is solidified as Ames considers the unthinkable alternative: “If the redemption of Christ were of uncertain outcome, the Father would have appointed the Son to death and the Son would have undergone it without any certainty whether any would be saved by it or not, and all the fruit of this mystery would depend upon the free will of men” (I.xxiv.7). Above all things, Ames is concerned with the glory of God’s efficiency, and any notion

of volition that grants to humans agency apart from God's initiative would undermine this efficiency.

Although Christ died only for the elect (I.xxiv.8), and only the elect will be saved (I.xxiv.9), Ames argues that Christ's sacrifice was infinite in terms of its "sufficiency," and so Christ may be thought of having "...made satisfaction for each and all." Given the hiddenness of God's counsels, Ames argues that it therefore "...is the part of charity to judge well of every one..." (I.xxiv.9).

In the context of Ames's account of the creation of humanity, he recounted the covenant made with Adam, which required perfect obedience for the promise of eternal life. The purposes of God in making that kind of covenant with Adam become clearer as Ames discusses the "New covenant." Ames's discussion of the differences between the old and new covenants is revealing and relevant to the topic of human volition. One of the differences between covenants was that "...the old was founded on the ability of man himself, but the new on Christ Jesus" (I.xxiv.17). The fall of Adam, like all events in the universe, was meant to magnify the efficiency and grace of God. In the old covenant God promised "only life," and Adam was found wanting. But in the New covenant, God provides not only the promise of life, but "...all the *means* of life" (italics mine, I.xxiv.18). Said a slightly different way, the old covenant "required perfect obedience of works to be performed by man *of his own strength* prior to the carrying out of the promise, which would then be in the form of a reward." Again, the moral strength and will of autonomous man was foiled in the old covenant, creating an opportunity for the demonstration of God's righteousness in the new.

Predestination

Early in his discussion of predestination, Ames, as a true Puritan, keeps the glory of God at center stage: “Predestination is a decree of God concerning the eternal condition of men which shows his special glory, Rom. 9:22, 23, *Willing to show his wrath and make his power known, he suffered with much patience the vessels of wrath prepared to destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for the vessels of his mercy, which he has prepared for glory...*” (I.xxv.3) As the term “destination” suggests, predestination receives its names because “there is a sure determination of the order of means for the end...” (I.xxv.4).

Ames had defined God’s decree as the “firm decision by which he performs all things through his almighty power according to his counsel” (I.vii.2). Consistent with this definition, Ames argues that predestination is called a decree “...because it contains a definite sentence to be executed under firm counsel” (I.xxv.5). Since counsel is decree, “...his deliberation over the best manner of accomplishing anything already approved by the understanding and the will [of God]” (I.vii.9), Ames concludes, “predestination is accompanied with the greatest wisdom, freedom, firmness, and immutability. These are found in all the decrees of God” (I.xxv.6). “...The number of the predestined...is certain with God not only in the certainty of his foreknowledge but in the certainty of the means he has ordered...” (I.xxv.7).

Recalling the efficiency or “working power” of God, Ames asserts that predestination *causes* its end to exist... it doesn’t presuppose that this end already exists (I.xxv.8), but “...it depends upon no cause, reason, or outward condition, but proceeds purely from the will of him who predestines. Matt. 11:26, *Even so, Father, because it*

pleases thee; Rom. 9:16, 18, It is not of him that wills or of him that runs but of God who shows mercy...He has mercy on whom he will and chooses those whom he will harden" (I.xxv.9).

The glory of God is further enhanced by the fact that God is not constrained by human merit. Since all humanity as a result of original sin is worthy of damnation, all humans are "equal among themselves." "Hence it is not necessary, nor does it agree with the Scriptures, to appoint any previous quality in man which might be considered the formal object of predestination." This does not mean that there is no difference between people, only that "the differences found in men are the result of the decree" (I.xxv.10).

Ames, with his eyes fastened upon the scriptures, ever careful to guard against the idea that God *reacts*, turns to the topic of foreknowledge, a favorite topic of Arminian theologians who found in the biblical idea of foreknowledge hope for a more libertarian idea of human freedom. The decree, Ames insists, is not based upon foreknowledge of future events, but "proceeds purely from the will of him who predestines. Eph. 1:5, 9, *He has predestined us...according to the good pleasure of his own will...according to his free will which he had purposed in himself*" (I.xxv.11). Indeed, foreknowledge itself is an act of God's will, and is used by scripture synonymously with predestination, although this signification is "less accurate. Rom. 11:2, *He has not cast away his people whom he foreknew*" (I.xxv.13). Properly speaking, predestination is "...an act of the divine will towards a certain object which it determines to bring to a certain end by certain means. Eph. 1:11, *We were chosen when we were predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things through the pleasure of his own will*" (I.xxv.12). Recalling his discussion of the efficiency of God, Ames reiterates, "there is properly only one act of

will in God because in him all things are simultaneous and there is nothing before or after. So there is only one decree about the end and means, but for our manner of understanding we say that, so far as intention is concerned, God wills the end before the means..." (I.xxv.14).

Finally, the predestination of God extends not only to the salvation of the elect, but also to the damnation of the reprobate: "There are two kinds of predestination, election and rejection or reprobation..." (I.xxv.17). "Election is the predestination of certain men so that the glorious grace of God may be shown in them. Eph. 1:4-6, *He has chosen us...he has predestined us...to the praise of his glorious grace*" (I.xxv.18). Reprobation, on the other hand, "is the predestination of certain men so that the glory of God's justice may be shown in them, Rom. 9:22; 2 Thess. 2:12; Jude 4" (I.xxv.30).

Calling

"Predestination has existed from eternity...but there is no inward difference in the predestined until the actual application of it. Eph. 2:3, *And we were by nature the children of wrath as well as others...*" (I.xxv.2). So, Ames indicates, predestination brings about an inward difference. The explanation of how this predestined "inward difference" comes about recalls the former discussion of the person and work of Christ, e.g., his "offices" his humiliation and exaltation, etc. In the section on "calling," we learn of God's initial transformation of the inner life of the believer. Ames begins with a dichotomy: "The parts of application are two, union with Christ and partaking of the benefits that flow from this union. Phil. 3:9; *That I may be found in him...having the righteousness that is by the faith of Christ*" (I.xxvi.1).

Union with Christ is “...the spiritual relation of men to Christ by which they obtain the right to all the blessings provided by him. 1 John 5:12, *He that has the Son has life*; and 3:24, *He dwells in him, and he in him*” (I.xxvi.2). (Ames discusses the “partaking” of the benefits in the next section, on justification). Since all humans are at first separated from God through sin, the union must be effected in time. “This union is accomplished by calling” (I.xxvi.3). Simply stated, “calling is the gathering of men together in Christ so that they may be united with him...” (I.xxvi.4). Calling, like predestination, is based upon the will of God only, and “...does not depend on the dignity, honesty, industry, or any endeavor of the ones called...” (I.xxvi.6).

Predictably, Ames finds two parts to the calling, “...the offer of Christ and the receiving of him...” (I.xxvi.7). In order for people to put trust in Christ, salvation must first be offered: “the offer is an objective presentation of Christ as the sufficient and necessary means to salvation. 1 Cor. 1:23, 24, *We preach Christ...*” (I.xxvi.8). This offer itself is dichotomized into the “outward” and “inward” offer (I.xxvi.10). The outward offer is simply “...the preaching of the gospel” (I.xxvi.11) to all who will hear. To make this preaching effective, the terrors of God’s law are used to “prepare” the hearer for the good news of grace (I.xxvi.12). This preaching is in one sense a most democratic affair, since “...the promises concerning the outward promulgation are given to all alike with one command to believe.” Nevertheless, since “...the peculiarity of the things promised...depend upon the intention of the promiser, the promises belong only to the elect who are called the *Sons and heirs of the promise*, Rom. 9:8” (I.xxvi.13). This recalls Ames’s comments that Christ’s death was only for the elect, yet in terms of its “sufficiency,” the death was infinite. In this light, Ames argued, the crucifixion may be

thought of having provided satisfaction for all, and that it therefore “...is the part of charity to judge well of every one...” (I.xxiv.9). Although Puritan theology did make strong distinctions between elect and reprobate, it also encouraged the faithful to hold these doctrines with humility.

It is the *inward* offer of Christ that always occasions the change of will, i.e., that makes the sinner able to respond to the offer of Christ. “The inward offer is a kind of spiritual enlightenment, whereby the promises are presented to the hearts of men, as it were, by an inner word. John 6:45, *Whoever has heard of the Father and has learned...comes to me...*” (I.xxvi.14). Yet, this illumination, although necessary, is not sufficient to produce faith, for “this is sometimes and in a certain way granted to those who are not elected...” (I.xxvi.15). In order for one to actually *receive* Christ, it is necessary that “...Christ...is joined to man and man to Christ. John 6:56, *He...abides in me, and I in him*” (I.xxvi.17). Christ, the source of human efficiency communicates that to the elect. Ames argues that this receiving is first “passive,” and then “active,” revealing that the renewal of the human will, like all things, is dependent ultimately upon the effectual will of God (I.xxvi.20).

If “receiving” is the joining of Christ to man *and* the joining of man to Christ (I.xxvi.17), the *passive* reception of Christ is related to the first, i.e., the joining of Christ to man. The passive reception of Christ includes the “generation” of “a spiritual principle of grace...in the will of man. Eph. 2:5, *He has quickened*” (I.xxvi.21), and is “...the very beginning of a new life, a new creation, a new creature...” Ames indicates that the Bible sometimes calls this event, among other things, “regeneration.” So, in this sense, Ames implies that the believer, by passively receiving Christ, is passively united to Christ

before *actively* receiving him. That is, a change is wrought in the will of the regenerated, but this change is distinct from and prior to any godly activity on the believer's part. Regeneration is the cause of godly activity. Ames quotes Ephesians 2:5 to illustrate the passive reception of Christ, which, when fully quoted, helps to illustrate that passive reception is a kind of passive union with Christ, "Even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." That is, this "quickening," or regeneration, or the beginning of new spiritual life, is accomplished "*together with Christ*," i.e., the passive reception of Christ can be understood as an aspect of union with Christ.

But the union remains, at this point, completely passive. Ames then argues that "this grace [of regeneration] is the basis of that relation [there is that word] in which a man is [actively] united with Christ" (I.xxvi.22). Going back to Ames's assertion that receiving Christ is the joining of Christ to man *and* man to Christ (I.xxvi.17), the *active* reception of Christ has to do with the believer uniting himself to Christ by virtue of an act of his changed will. That is, passive union with Christ is the basis of active union. Ames quotes Philippians 3:12 to illustrate the difference between passive and active reception of Christ, "...receiving is either passive or active. Phil. 3:12, *I apprehend, because I have been apprehended*." Being passively apprehended by Christ results in a will to apprehend Christ.

In the section on original sin, Ames argued that sin influenced the whole person and each of its "parts," including intellect, conscience, will, and body. This might suggest that the renewal provided by Christ would apply to each of these "parts" equally. Not so. Not only is the will "the proper and prime subject of this grace [of

regeneration]...” but, more radically, “...the conversion of the will is the effectual principle in the conversion of the whole man. Phil. 2:13, *It is God that works in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure*” (I.xxvi.23). Making a strong “voluntarist” argument, Ames insists, “the enlightening of the mind is not sufficient...” to convert the whole man “...because it does not take away the corruption of the will. Nor does it communicate any new supernatural principle by which it may convert itself” (I.xxvi.24). Ames made a similar argument when discussing God’s decrees; it is God’s will that makes the crucial difference between the “knowledge of simple understanding” (I.vii.25) which refers to possibilities and the “knowledge of vision” (I.vii.26), which has to do with things that will certainly come to pass. God knows all possibilities, but only when his will is added does possibility become reality. Likewise, the human will is the decisive difference between merely speculative intellectual activity and the intellectual activity that results in action. Yet, the analogy between God and humanity inevitably breaks down. Despite this “dignity of efficiency” possessed by the regenerated will, it is still unequivocally a derived, communicated efficiency (see I.ix.6). In the act of reception, the human will is at first completely passive, and “...plays the role neither of a free agent nor a natural bearer, but only of an obedient subject. 2 Cor. 4:6; *For it is the God who has said that light should shine out of darkness who has shined in our hearts*” (I.xxvi.25).

This passive reception of grace, which includes the renewal of the will through a principle of grace (see above) inevitably results in human activity, particularly active reception of Christ and his benefits. “Active receiving is an elicited act of faith in which he who is called now holy leans upon Christ as his savior and through Christ upon God.

John 3:15, 16, *Whoever believes in him*; 1 Peter 1:21, *Through him believing in God*' (I.xxvi.26). This act of faith, as Ames explained earlier, is itself distinguished from mere intellectual assent through the participation of will. Yet the participation of the renewed human will through faith is paradoxical. It cannot be understood to be the possession of the human, because this would grant an autonomy of the human which does not comport with God's efficiency. Yet, it cannot *simply* be God's will expressed in humans, for this would deny humanity the dignity of efficiency that God communicates to the creature. Ames quickly resolves the tension thus, "this act of faith depends partly upon an inborn principle or attitude toward grace [which makes faith the believer's] and partly upon the action of God moving before and stirring up [which makes faith the gift of God]. John 6:44, *None can come to me, unless the Father...draws him*" (I.xxvi.27). Human freedom is secured in this paradox. Faith is "...indeed called forth and exercised by man *freely but also surely*, unavoidably, and unchangeably" (italics added). Ames clarifies by quoting John 6:37, "*Whomever my Father gives me will come to me*" (I.xxvi.28). Although the initiative is found in the Father, who gives the elect to the Son, the elect "will come" of their own accord. Although Arminians would challenge the justice of this doctrine, and would insist on exercising an efficiency that is ultimately not derivative, Ames was comforted by the certainty of God's salvation, and was content with a merely derived efficiency of action.

The renewed will not only embraces Christ and all his benefits, but also, from union with Christ, begins to reject evil. In other words, repentance is an inevitable outcome of union with Christ: "with this faith in which the will is turned to possessing the true good, there is always joined repentance, in which the same will is turned to doing

the true good and comes to turn away from and hate the contrary evil or sin. Acts 19:4; Mark 1:15, *Repent, and believe in the gospel*” (I.xxvi.29). Repentance, like faith, is the free gift of God, “Eph. 2:8; *Faith is the gift of God*; 2 Tim. 2:25, *Whether God may at some time give them repentance*,” and, also like faith, has “the same subject,” i.e., they “...both have their seat in the heart or will of man. Rom. 10:9; 1 Kings 8:48, *With the heart man believes. They shall come back with all their heart*.” Although faith and repentance are “begotten at the same time,” they do have different objects, “...for faith is properly directed to Christ and through Christ to God, but repentance is directed to God himself who has been offended by the sin...” and different ends, “...for faith properly seeks reconciliation with God but repentance [seeks] compliance with the will of God...” (I.xxvi.30). Further, this repentance is thoroughgoing: “repentance is not true and sound when it does not turn a man from all known sin to all known good, or when it does not continue in strength and actually renew itself continually from the time of conversion to the end of life” (I.xxvi.33). Evidently, Puritan confidence in the regenerating work of God was so strong that despite their ever-present awareness of sin, they also believed that holiness was a possibility in this life.

Justification. As Ames continues with the *ordo salutis*, the unresolved tensions regarding union with Christ become manifest, and make the discussion fairly complicated. Since these aspects of salvation are related to human volition, it is necessary to wade through, however. After calling, the next “step” in the order of salvation is “justification,” or the declaration by God of the believer to be righteous in God’s sight on the basis of Christ’s merits alone.

Ames argues that there are “blessings” associated with union with Christ, and that believers “participate” in these blessings (I.xxvii.1). Using language that seems to harken back to the issue of calling and regeneration, Ames says that participation in the benefits of union “...brings a change and alteration in the condition of believers from the state of sin and death to the state of righteousness and eternal life. 1 John 3:14, *we know that we are translated from death to life*” (I.xxvii.2). This statement, arguing that the “change and alteration” from the state of sin to the state of righteousness begins *after* calling, is a counter-intuitive, since calling (it may be recalled) includes the “generation” of “a spiritual principle of grace...in the will of man. Eph. 2:5, *He has quickened*” (I.xxvi.21). In other words, Ames seems to be saying that the “change and alteration in the condition of believers from the state of sin and death to the state of righteousness...” only happens after the very significant change and alteration of calling and regeneration. The key to resolving this apparent contradiction is found in Ames’s assertion (quoted above) that believers “participate” in the blessings in Christ (I.xxvii.1). The idea here is that believers must be *active* in appropriating these blessings before they can be considered righteous. During the passive reception of Christ, there is indeed a true but incomplete “change and alteration,” but it cannot be said that this change is from “sin to the state of righteousness” until the believer actively *receives* Christ. Further, though the believer has passively received Christ, sin continues to remain in the person, further negating the idea that the Christian can be called “righteous” before faith.

Ames desired to make a clear distinction between two different changes that follow union (meaning active union) with Christ, “...relative and absolute (or real)” (I.xxvii.3). The *relative* change has to do with “...God’s reckoning” or declaration, rather

than an actual change in the life or heart of the believer. Ames quotes Romans 4:5 to illustrate the idea that the believer is graciously “declared” or “counted” righteous while remaining sinful: “Rom. 4:5, *And to him who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is imputed [or reckoned] as righteousness...*” (I.xxvii.4). This justification of the ungodly, in which faith is imputed as righteousness “...is the gracious judgment of God by which he absolves the believer from sin and death, and reckons him righteous and worthy of life for the sake of Christ apprehended in faith. Rom. 3:22, 24, *The righteousness of God by faith in Jesus Christ in all and upon all that believe...they are freely justified by his grace...through the redemption made by Jesus Christ*” (I.xxvii.6). That is, by virtue of union with Christ, the believer is accepted as righteous in Christ, although the believer remains sinful. Justification also “...has not degrees and is completed at one moment and in only one act” (I.xxvii.5). Because justification is simply the “...pronouncing of a sentence...” there is not “...physical or real change” involved in justification, only “...a judicial or moral change” (I.xxvii.7). Ames clearly has the refutation of Catholic orthodoxy in mind at this point, saying that Thomas Aquinas was wrong to argue that justification includes a real change (I.xxvii.8).

Catholic orthodoxy held that people are justified (declared to be righteous in God’s sight) on the basis of the real changes wrought in them through Christ. That is, in the Catholic view, a person is declared righteous because they *are* righteous, even though this righteousness is ultimately derived from Christ. The problem with this view, the Puritans (and the Reformers in general) seemed to think, was that it made the continuation of justification dependent upon the believer’s appropriation of Christ’s righteousness, and, more to the point, made it possible for justification to be lost, which

they contended was clearly not taught in the scriptures. So, the Puritans needed to argue that justification is a once-for-all declaration that depends upon God's declaration, not the believer's meritorious appropriation of Christ. The problem that Ames seems to encounter here is that while arguing that no "physical or real change" is involved in justification, he previously seemed to argue that a real change took place during calling.

Justification, in which "...the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers..." (I.xxvii.12), "...comes about because of Christ, but not in the absolute sense of Christ's being the cause of vocation." That is, the believer is not declared righteous in God's sight by virtue of responding to the gospel, or by receiving new life through regeneration (i.e., the passive reception of Christ). That would, in the former case, make justification to be based upon the good works of the believer, and, in the latter case, make justification to be based upon a gracious but incomplete change of heart and will wrought by God. Instead of being based upon some goodness in the believer, justification is "a gracious judgment" of God (I.xxvii.10). Instead of the believer's obedience, justification is based upon "the obedience of Christ" (I.xxvii.11). A believer is justified rather "...because Christ is apprehended by faith, which follows calling as an effect." This faith lays hold of "...the righteousness of Christ..." (I.xxvii.14), rather than leaning upon its own inherent righteousness.

Although justification itself is not based upon a change of will, it still involves the will because it involves faith. As is the case with faith in general, justifying faith is inextricably linked to the will. Consistent with his general discussion of faith which carefully distinguishes faith from simple intellectual assent (I.iii), this justifying faith "...is not the general faith of the understanding by which we give assent to the truth

revealed in the Holy Scriptures, for that belongs not only to those who are justified, nor of its nature has it any force to justify, nor produce the effects which are everywhere in Scripture given to justifying faith” (I.xxvii.15). Truth faith, by implication, produces effects. That is, it involves the will. Instead of merely affirming certain facts about the gospel, true faith actual *relies* “...upon Christ for the remission of sins and for salvation,” seeing Christ as “...a sufficient object for justifying faith.” As testimony to the believer’s trust in Christ’s sufficiency, faith leans upon “...Christ alone...” for salvation (I.xxvii.17).

Again, justification does not entail a real change in the believer, “justification does not free from sin and death directly by taking away the blame or stain or all the effects of sin,” rather, justification is a legal declaration, removing “...the guilty obligation to undergo eternal death. Rom. 8:1, 33, 34, *There is no condemnation...Who shall lay anything to their charge? ...who shall condemn?*” (I.xxvii.20). Although a deep change is wrought in the believer during her passive reception of Christ, the justification of the sinner is based not upon these changes, but upon reliance on Christ’s merit alone. Still, the knowledge that one is accepted by God was thought to have had a positive influence on the will.

Adoption. Another great benefit of union with Christ that entails a “relative” but not a “real” change in the believer is “adoption,” which is “... the gracious judgment of God wherein he gives the faithful the dignity of sonship because of Christ...” (I.xxviii.1). Believers in Christ are given the grace and right to refer to God as “father.” The two preceding works in the *ordo salutis*, i.e., calling and justification, form the “foundation” for adoption (I.xxviii.5). For example, “the reconciliation found in justification,” i.e., the belief that the break in relationship with God due to sin is resolved, is understood as a

presupposition for the believer to believe that God is a loving father (I.xxviii.6). The “sublime dignity” of adoption therefore does not make the believer just (I.xxviii.4), but is given to those declared just in Christ. Although adoption, like justification, reflects only a “relative” change in the status of the believer and does not include explicit changes in the will, the will is involved in two ways. First, adoption, like justification, is appropriated by faith, which by definition includes the will. Second, and relatedly, the reassuring knowledge that God is father, Ames argues, does influence the will of the believer.

Sanctification. Having discussed justification and adoption, which are “relative” changes of state for believers, Ames then discusses the “real” changes that accompany faith in Christ. These real changes of state include an “...alteration of qualities in man himself. 2 Cor. 5:17, *Old things have passed away; all things are new*” (I.xxix.1).

The real changes (i.e., the “alteration of qualities”) that take place in believers are dichotomized into “sanctification” and “glorification,” the former having to do with the gradual and imperfect changes wrought in the believer before death and the second coming of Christ, the latter having to do with the sudden and perfect changes wrought after death and/or the second coming (I.xxix.3). Sanctification is defined as “... the real change in man from the sordidness of sin to the purity of God’s image. Eph. 4:22-24...” (I.xxix.4). Ames contrasts justification and sanctification. Justification frees the believer from “the guilt of sin” while sanctification frees the believer from “the sordidness and stain of sin...” This freedom is nothing less than a restoration of “...the purity of God’s image...” (I.xxix.5).

Ames distinguished sanctification from the faith and repentance that are brought about in calling. In calling, “...faith is not properly considered a quality but a relationship with Christ, nor is repentance considered a change of disposition (for then it would be the same as sanctification), but a change of the mind’s purpose and intent.” By contrast, “sanctification involves a real change of qualities and disposition” (I.xxix.8). This seems a bit inconsistent. Previously, Ames argues that there is “a spiritual principle of grace [wrought]...in the will of man. Eph. 2:5, *He has quickened*” (I.xxvi.21).” Similarly, Ames argued that “this act of faith depends partly upon an inborn principle or attitude toward grace...” (I.xxvi.27). It is strange that Ames would argue that a “spiritual principle of grace” implanted in the will, or “an inborn principle or attitude toward grace” which precede faith and repentance do not qualify as a change in disposition. Perhaps it would have made more sense for Ames to have said that regeneration is the first step in sanctification. But Ames’s desire to maintain the idea that justification *precedes* sanctification in order to avoid the idea that justification is based upon the good works of the regenerated believer may have led to a certain inconsistency.

Just as original sin influences the entire person, sanctification “...pertains to the whole man and not to any one part. 1 Thess. 5:23, *Now may the god of peace himself sanctify you wholly...*” Yet, sanctification takes time; the “whole man” “...is not immediately changed” (I.xxix.10).

The priority of the will in Ames’s thought is further affirmed in the process of sanctification. Recall that in “calling” the will was “the proper and prime subject of this grace [of regeneration]...” which brought about “...the conversion of the whole man” (I.xxvi.23). Similarly, the grace of sanctification “...is found first and most appropriately

in the will whence it passes to other faculties according to the order of nature...”
(I.xxix.11).

Sanctification involves the movement from “...the filthiness, corruption, or stain of sin. 2 Cor. 7:1...” (I.xxix.13) to “...the purity of God’s image” (I.xxix.14), producing “...a new and divine creature...” (I.xxix.15). The crucial temporal dimension of sanctification is expressed by the “two degrees of sanctification,” one degree occurring “in this life” and the other degree occurring “in the life to come...” This second degree of sanctification entails the cessation of “...the movement and progress of sanctification...” resulting in “...rest and perfection...” Therefore, “...in this life we are more properly said to enjoy sanctification than sanctity, and in the life to come only sanctity and not sanctification” (I.xxix.16).

The fact that sanctification is not completed until “the life to come,” means that sanctification is “...imperfect while we live here as children,” and, “...all believers have, as it were, a double form—that of sin and that of grace...” Ames jealously guards against any intimation that perfection can be found in the present life, which is a belief found only “...in the dreams of some fanatics. 1 John 1:8, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us.*” Nevertheless, “...all that are truly sanctified tend to perfection, Matt. 5:48; 1 Cor. 13:11; 2 Peter 3:18” (I.xxix.29). The remaining sin found in believers is called “...in the Scriptures [among other things] the *Old man*...” The sanctified or “...renewed part is called the *New man...the mind*, and the like” (I.xxix.30). The will of the regenerate is therefore involved in “...a spiritual war [that] is continually waged between these parts. Gal. 5:17...” Further, given that the believer’s victory in this battle is incomplete in this life, “...there is [also] a daily renewal of repentance”

(I.xxix.31). Recognizing a similar internal battle in unbelievers, Ames argues that this struggle “...is not the striving of the spirit against the flesh but that of flesh fearing against flesh inordinately desiring” (I.xxix.37). Ames is ever careful to maintain a strict distinction between the psychology of believer and unbeliever.

Maintaining the assertion that sin affects the “whole man,” Ames argued that the sin that remains in the believer “...is not only in the inciting and sensory appetite [i.e., in the body], but in the will and reason itself [i.e., in the soul], 1 Thess. 5:23” (I.xxix.32). Although Ames’s theology pits “flesh” against “spirit,” which recapitulates the classical Greek antimony, we also see that Ames’s psychology does not argue that one part of the human mind is better than another (as did Plato, for example; see Cooper). Sin influences the “whole man,” body *and* mind.

Finally, although “...the best works of the saints are so corrupted by this flesh that some remission is needed” (I.xxix.34), “...the good works of the regenerate are not to be called sin; rather they are said to be defiled with sin” (I.xxix.35). Because the believer trusts in the righteousness of Christ (and not her own), that is, “Because of justification, the defilement of good works does not prevent their being accepted and rewarded by God” (I.xxix.36).

Glorification: Heaven on Earth. Given the imperfections of sanctification for believers, Ames calls this process of sanctification “a just and honorable good” (p. 171). Believers are capable, however, of experiencing the perfections of heaven, even in the present life. This experience of “perfect and exalted good” is called “glorification,” which is “... the real change in man from misery, or the punishment of sin, to eternal happiness. Rom. 8:30, *Those whom he justified he also glorified*” (I.xxx.1). “Since the

starting point is misery or the punishment of sin, [glorification] is called [in the Scriptures] redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30...” (I.xxx.3), and “redemption is a real deliverance from the evils of punishment, which is actually nothing but the carrying out of the sentence of justification.” While justification involves being “...pronounced just and awarded the judgment of life,” glorification is the “actual possession” of what is awarded and pronounced in justification (I.xxx.4).

Ames argues that glorification has several steps, the first of which is “...the apprehension and sense of the love of God...” (I.xxx.8). The second stage of glorification is the “...undoubting hope and expectation of the enjoyment of all those good things which God has prepared for his own. Rom 5:2, *We rejoice under the hope of the glory of God*” (I.xxx.10). In this section, Ames unpacks a Puritan doctrine of assurance of salvation. While all believers have objective certainty of salvation, only some attain to *subjective* certainty. This certainty has certain fruits, e.g., “...consolation, peace, and unspeakable joy...” which Ames details. The third stage of glorification “...is the possession of spiritual gifts of grace in overflowing abundance...” (I.xxx.27), which would undoubtedly include the gift of freedom of will to the good, although Ames does not mention it explicitly. The fourth stage of glorification “...is the experience of God’s benevolence or good will...” (I.xxx.29), which includes “...God’s fatherly providence whereby he watches ever over the faithful for good...” (I.xxx.30), and the sense that “...all things work together for the good of God’s children, Romans 8:28” (I.xxx.31).

The final stage is “perfect glorification,” which involves “...the taking away of every imperfection from soul and body and the bestowal of total perfection” (I.xxx.33). Perfect glorification “...is granted to the soul immediately after the separation from the

body, 2 Cor. 5:2...It is not ordinarily granted to the soul and body together until that last day when all the faithful shall in one moment be perfected in Christ, Eph. 4:13; Phil. 3:20, 21” (I.xxx.34). Included in this perfection would be the perfection of will, in which the Christian, forever freed from sin, continually wills the good.

The Community, and Communities, of the Willing

Although the application of Christ through calling, adoption, justification, sanctification and glorification is granted to individuals, the Puritans did not believe that Christ could be appropriated *individualistically*. This community orientation of Puritan theology served to sustain the particularity of Puritan belief, and, by implication, the faculty psychology of will. As was the case with the person and work of Christ, some of the details to follow do not deal with the will per se. Yet all of these things are relevant to the way in which Puritans thought about moral community. The Puritan story included details about *how* the story should be preserved. And, as I argued in the Introduction, moral community or culture, by preserving and reinforcing particular standards, are a necessity in the successful implementation of any moral endeavor. Surely the Puritan moral culture was one of the factors which historically had sustained the topic of the will in America, at least for a time. We will notice, however, a conspicuous absence of such communal and cultural considerations in the texts of Edwards, Upham, and James.

The subject of the application of Christ, Ames argued, is the church (rather than the individual believer), although this church is admittedly composed of “individual men” (I.xxxi.1). The church is, however, more than the subject of redemption. It is also the *effect* of redemption. The church does not somehow precede calling, which results in “...union and communion with Christ;” rather, “it is the church of Christ *because* it is

united to Christ” (I.xxxi.2, italics mine). Indeed, since the New Testament word “church” is etymologically related to the word “calling,” the church is “...*constituted* by calling, whence both its name and definition” (I.xxxi.6, italics mine). Since union with Christ characterizes the church as well as the individual believer, the one and the many are reconciled: “...believing men, on the one hand, are individuals called by God; on the other, they are collectively the company which is the church of God” (I.xxxi.14). As the church is defined by the redemption (calling, adoption, etc.) described above, it is therefore impossible to “...understand the nature of the church unless we first perceive and explain the things which have to do with the application of Christ” (I.xxxi.3).

The church is a community which receives its identity by virtue of its common relation to Christ. “Because the end of calling is faith and the work of faith is grafting into Christ, and this union brings with it communion with Christ, the church can be defined “as a company of believers, a company of those who are in Christ, and a company of those who have communion with him” (I.xxxi.7). Similarly, the church is defined by the object of its attention and affection. “Faith looks to Christ and through Christ to God; likewise the church which exists by faith looks to Christ as its head and through Christ to God...” (I.xxxi.8, see I.xxxi.11). The relation of Christ and church is “so intimate,” that Christ must not only be considered as being in the church, and the church in Christ, but the church is even “...mystically called *Christ*, 1 Cor. 12:12, and the *Fullness of Christ*, Eph. 1:23” (I.xxxi.15). Christ is the source of the church’s virtue and growth, and “...is the beginning honor, life, power, perfection in the church” (I.xxxi.17).

The doctrine of the church contained components that may have conduced to both Enlightenment and democratic belief. For one, the church “...embraces believers of all

nations, of all places, and of all times” and is therefore called catholic (I.xxxi.19).

Despite the sharp differentiation between saint and sinner, Puritan ecclesiology did also contain the belief that there indeed *was* a universal, international community of like-minded believers, and that, in the end, this community would be perfected and victorious. It is a small but significant change to argue that the community of like-minded believers might be perfected and victorious *in this life*.

Although the universalistic seeds for Enlightenment may have been found in Puritan thinking, these seeds could not grow in the soil of Puritan community and theology. The victory of the church is constrained by the will of God and by sin. Before Christ’s return, the church is “militant,” and “...knows only of a communion begun and so still struggles with enemies in the battlefield of this world...” (I.xxxi.22). Only after Christ’s return is the church “triumphant” and “perfected” (I.xxxi.23). Further, grandiosity was held in check by the distinction between the “invisible and visible” militant church (I.xxxi.24). Invisibility applies to the “essential and internal form” while visibility has to do with “its accidental and external form” (I.xxxi.25). The essential form is “a relation which cannot be perceived by the senses” (I.xxxi.26), while the accidental form is “easily perceived by sense,” and is defined by the “outward profession of faith...” (I.xxxi.27). Distinguishing between God-ordained institutional activity, i.e., the “outward profession of faith” in individual communities, and the true relation which these institutions were meant to embody left the Puritans with a sense that their own communities could be forgeries. In other words, it was possible that the community could profess faith, but lack the inward and invisible relation to Christ that the community claimed to possess. Nevertheless, it was possible to discern true and healthy

churches from false churches, based upon “the profession” of individual churches. This is illustrated by the distinction between the “manifest” and the “hidden” visible church (I.xxxi.32). The visible church is manifest when “...a greater number of saints exist and profession is freer and more public” (I.xxxi.33), and the church is hidden when “the number is fewer and profession less open. This is likely to occur in time of heresies, persecutions, or godless morality” (I.xxxi.34). Consistent with Ames’s dichotomization of theology into faith and observance, profession cannot be reduced to affirming correct doctrine. “Profession depends not only upon confession and the preaching of the word, but also upon the receiving of it and devout obedience to it” (I.xxxi.36). So, while the possibility that the community of the willing be fraudulent, lacking the inner reality of vital union with Christ, the Puritans also had a strong sense of what was needed to sustain this community. Doctrine and observance would need to be strictly maintained. The Puritans also took comfort in the belief that while the church is “subject to changes” it will never fail (I.xxxi.37), “for Christ must always have his kingdom in the midst of his enemies until he makes his enemies his footstool” (I.xxxi.38).

Finally, the theology of the church, or the community of believers, also contained moral prescriptions. The church was to engage in acts of communion with Christ, which had to do with presenting themselves to God and seeking his glory (I.xxxi.29), and also acts of communion with fellow believers, having to do with striving “...to do good to each other” (I.xxxi.30). Further, since God had not revealed precisely *who* were the elect, the kindness of the faith community was to be extended to all people. “Many acts of this kind are to be performed towards those who are not yet members of the church, for they ought to be judged as belonging to it potentially” (I.xxxi.31).

Thus far, Ames's doctrine of the church is very abstract. In his discussion concerning the "institution" of the church, he lays out the theology undergirding the establishment of particular expressions of the broader, universal church. Though the church is "catholic," and includes all believers everywhere, the church is "visible" at the local level, "...both individually in its single members and collectively in its companies or congregations" (I.xxxii.1). Each individual, "particular" congregation is properly called a "church" (I.xxxii.3), and is "...a species of the church as a genus..." (I.xxxii.5).

Intentional community was a must. "Believers do not make a particular church...unless they are joined together by a special bond among themselves" (I.xxxii.14). "This bond is a covenant, expressed or implicit, by which believers bind themselves individually to perform all those duties toward God and toward one another which relate to the purpose...of the church and its edification" (I.xxxii.15). "Therefore, no one is rightly admitted to the church except on confession of faith and promise of obedience" (I.xxxii.17).

The covenant to join a church is strictly distinguished from the "covenant to make a city or some civil society..." A passage that would evidently be taken seriously in New England, Ames argues that "the same men may make a city or political society and not a church; or a church and not a city; or both a church and a city" (I.xxxii.19). In any permutation, the distinction is clearly important.

Although the "secondary causes" of human effort and activity is required in establishing a particular church, the church is still "...instituted by God and by Christ alone" for the express reason that "...men have no power in themselves to institute or frame a church for Christ..." (I.xxxii.23). While human covenant is necessary in this

institution, the church, Ames argues, “always depends upon him [Christ] as the head...” (I.xxxii.25), and follows Christ’s “ordinances” carefully (I.xxxii.26).

When a particular church faithfully relies upon and obeys Christ, the church can always expect God’s blessing to follow. Ames takes this reassuring belief to a strongly anti-individualistic conclusion. Since “...the ordinances of Christ always have God’s blessing with them...” it follows that “...an ampler and surer blessing of God may be expected in the instituted church of God than is found in any solitary life” (I.xxxii.27). “Therefore, those who have opportunity to join the church and neglect it...can scarcely be counted believers truly seeking the kingdom of God” (I.xxxii.28). Community was not an optional requirement for the Puritan.

The Earthly Means of Restoration

The discussion of the institution of the church completes Ames’s discussion of the application of redemption. Turning then to the “way of application” (I.xxxiii.1), Ames elaborates upon “...those means whereby the Spirit bestows Christ and all his benefits on us for our salvation” (I.xxxiii.2). These means are well-suited to the sustenance of moral community, as well as the continued sanctification of the will of the godly. The means Ames discusses depend upon the Holy Spirit, rather than having inherent power to “communicate grace.” “Therefore, although external means naturally concur and operate in the preparation of man to receive grace, yet in themselves they do not properly confer grace. It is the Spirit that works together with them, 1 Cor. 3:7, *Neither is he that plants anything nor he that waters, but god who gives power to increase*” (I.xxxiii.3). Even the means of grace serve as a reminder of human weakness and need of God’s grace. Ames dichotomizes the means of grace into “the ministry” and “the holy signs.” Somewhat

awkwardly he notes that “ecclesiastical discipline” must also be “added” to the means of grace (I.xxxiii.4).

The ministry, Ames describes as “...an ecclesiastical function in which a man, being singled out, is responsible by special right for holy things...” (I.xxxiii.5). These men do not single themselves out nor do they have the power to appoint by themselves other ministers. Instead, the power given to ministers “...is a power of acting only by command of Christ and out of obedience to him alone, 1 Cor. 4:1,2” (I.xxxiii.6). Ministers do not possess “the spiritual or regal power of self-rule whereby one works in freedom and by his own choice...” which belongs to “...Christ alone” (I.xxxiii.7). The will of the minister is rather to be submitted to the will of God. Ministerial power, furthermore, is “relative” (I.xxxiii.10), and “...depends upon calling, Heb. 5:4, *No one takes this honor to himself except he that is called of god as was Aaron*” (I.xxxiii.14). Calling in turn depends upon “fitness for the ministry” (I.xxxiii.15), which “...arises from a fit measure of gifts and a ready will to undertake and execute the office” (xxxiii.17). The end of the ministry is the holy activity (i.e., holy volition) of the church, and endeavors to make the church “fit to do all the works which pertain to the good of the whole” (I.xxxiii.18). This Puritan understanding of ministerial power can be understood as a stepping stone between monarchy and democracy, being “...altogether monarchical in respect to Christ as the king and the head. But in respect to the visible system of administration, it is of a mixed nature; partly aristocratic, so to speak, and partly democratic” (I.xxxiii.20) Ames’s congregational polity becomes manifest here, “There is no place for hierarchy, only “hieroduly or sacred service” (I.xxxiii.21). Further, each minister “depends directly upon Christ” that is, is not “subject to the power of another”

(I.xxxiii.22), thereby ruling out presbyteries or synods as authoritative ruling bodies.

Clearly, although American Puritanism did sustain moral communities, the training of the Puritan will did not require vast institutional infrastructure.

Ames makes a crucial distinction between “extraordinary” and “ordinary” (I.xxxiii.23), which served to explain the authority of the Puritan minister, and to connect this authority to the history of the Christian church. The extraordinary ministry were the apostles, prophets, and evangelists of the New Testament era (I.xxxiii.37), who served to place the church on firm foundations. Ames describes this ministry as “...one which has a certain higher and more perfect direction than can be attained through the ordinary means” (I.xxxiii.24). Extraordinary ministers serve “without error” (I.xxxiii.25), are called by God alone (I.xxxiii.26), and that calling is “direct” rather than mediated through people (I.xxxiii.27). The necessity for the extraordinary ministry is found in human weakness and need, “...because that will of God to which living well to God is directed could not be discovered by human industry or any ordinary means used in other arts and sciences. But it required men who were stirred up and sent by God...” (I.xxxiii.29).

From the point of view of the Puritan, the role of the extraordinary ministers was to leave the Holy Scriptures: “extraordinary ministers were raised up by God to instruct the churches not only orally, but also by divine writings...” These writings would allow the church to continue to benefit from their ministry “...even when such ministers no longer remained” (I.xxxiv.1). Due to the directing hand of God, the apostolic writings were “free from all error,” (I.xxxiv.2) and therefore completely reliable. Ames argues that the Holy Spirit inspired the writings in such a way that “what the authors have committed to writing, in terms of its substance and chief end is nothing else than the

revealed word of God, which is the rule of faith and morals” (I.xxxiv.10). Both the subject and object of the Holy Scripture is God’s will: “It is called Holy Scripture...partly because of its subject and its object, which is the true and saving will of God...” (I.xxxiv.13).

Ames, like all Puritans, affirmed that the Scriptures, like their Author, are absolutely sufficient, “all things necessary to salvation are contained in the Scriptures and also those things necessary for the instruction and edification of the church...” (I.xxxiv.15). “Therefore, Scripture is not a partial but a perfect rule of faith and morals...” (I.xxxiv.16). Part of the perfection of scripture is the way its style “...best fits the common usage of all sorts of men...” by using “...stories, examples, precepts, exhortations, admonitions, and promises,” rather than, “universal and scientific rules.” And, perhaps the greatest praise that Ames could offer the scriptures is that the style of the scripture “...greatly affects the will by stirring up pious motives, which is the chief end of theology” (I.xxxiv.19).

Since the scriptures were sufficient to inflame men’s wills, the minister needed to adequately convey this power and to guard against hiding this power from his flock. Ames’s discussion of the “ordinary ministry” is therefore tied tightly to the ministry of preaching. Ames defines the ordinary ministry as that “...which receives all of its direction from the will of God revealed in the Scriptures and from those means which God has appointed in the church for its continual edification” (I.xxxv.1). The purpose of this ministry is to “...preserve, propagate, and renew the church through regular means” (I.xxxv.9). Since ministers depend upon the scriptures, they depend upon the extraordinary ministers (I.xxxv.4). Further, unlike the extraordinary ministers, the calling

of the ordinary ministry is indirect (I.xxxv.5), through the means of the church, which chooses men who, appearing as suitable (I.xxxv.7), are given a “lawful examination” in order to test the authenticity of their calling (I.xxxv.8).

More directly related to the topic of volition, ordinary ministers are given to move the wills of the members of the church through preaching. Preaching the biblical message “...is of utmost importance...” which is evidenced by the fact of its “...continuous use in the church” (I.xxxv.11). The preacher is called “to set forth the will of God out of the word for the edification of the hearers” (I.xxxv.12).

In order to assure that his readers (many of which at Harvard and Yale would become preachers) would become effective preachers of the word, Ames lays down several principles geared toward the inflaming of the believer’s will. It is imperative, Ames argued, that the preacher earnestly desire the edification of the church (I.xxxv.13). Further, he needs to keep “each individual” in his congregation in mind, not just the group (I.xxxv.14). Turning aside to “trivial points” that hinder edification is to be avoided (I.xxxv.15). The minister himself should strive to be saturated in the Bible, or, as Apollos was declared to be in the book of Acts, “mighty in the Scriptures” (I.xxxv.16)

To “set forth” God’s will in a winsome manner, Ames instructs the aspiring minister that “...two things are necessary: First, the things contained in the [biblical] text [to be preached] must be stated; second, they must be applied to the consciences of the hearers as their condition seems to require. 1 Tim. 6:17...” (I.xxxv.17). More specifically, “In setting forth the truth in the text the minister should first explain it and then indicate the good which follows from it. The first part is concerned with doctrines and proofs; the latter with application...” (I.xxxv.19). Ames warns his students that the

hearer may not be edified if this pattern is not followed (I.xxxv.20). In a manner that recalls the Puritan distrust of merely speculative knowledge, Ames insists that “each doctrine when sufficiently explained should immediately be applied to its use...” (I.xxxv.29). A minister sins when he limits his discussion to “...the naked finding and explanation of the truth...” To limit the sermon to mere doctrine is to neglect “...the use and practice in which religion and blessedness consist. Such preachers edify the conscience little or not at all” (I.xxxv.30). Further, the minister is not to elucidate esoteric doctrines from a given passage, but only those which seem “most necessary” are to be preached (I.xxxv.31). The minister should use logical order to assist the memory (I.xxxv.33).

Application, which should follow doctrine (I.xxxv.44), aims “...to sharpen and make specially relevant some general truth with such effect that it may pierce the minds of those present with the stirring up of godly affections” (I.xxxv.45). Ames elaborates thus:

Men are to be pricked to the quick so that they feel individually what the Apostle said, namely, that the word of the Lord is a two-edged sword, piercing to the inward thought and affections and through to the joining of bones and marrow.

Preaching, therefore, out not to be dead, but alive and effective...(I.xxxv.46)

Anything that might prevent the hearer from being “pricked to the quick” are to be avoided. “Stories known only to the learned ought [not]...be mixed in...Much less should words or sentences in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew be used which the people do not understand” (I.xxxv.55). Likewise, a “show of learning” is to be avoided in preaching (I.xxxv.57). Effective preaching requires total commitment and consecration to the task:

Speech and action should be completely spiritual, flowing from the very heart.

They should show a man well versed in the Scriptures and in pious exercises, who has first persuaded himself and thoroughly settled in his own conscience those things to which he would persuade others, and in whom, finally, there is zeal, charity, mildness, freedom, and humility mixed with solemn authority.

(I.xxxv.60)

Further, “pronunciation must be natural, familiar, clear, and distinct so that it can be easily understood. It should fit the matter in such a way that the affections are moved...” (I.xxxv.61). The affections are hindered by two “offensive” styles, i.e., speaking too fast (I.xxxv.63) or too slow (I.xxxv.62), both of which are to be avoided. “The sum of the matter...” Ames argued, “...is that nothing is to be allowed which does not contribute to the spiritual edification of the people, and nothing omitted by which we may surely reach that end” (I.xxxv.67).

The second means whereby the Spirit of God applies Christ and his benefits “...is found in the signs, or symbols” (I.xxxvi.1). Ames defines “sign” as “...something perceptible to the senses which, beyond the appearance of the thing it brings directly to the senses, at the same time makes something else come to mind” (I.xxxvi.2). The aspect of this discussion most relevant to volition has to do with “sealing” signs. Ames distinguishes “sealing” signs from “informing” and “reminding” signs:

In reference to end and use, [a sign] either serves *the understanding* and is called an informing sign; or it serves *the memory* and is called a reminding sign; or it serves *faith* and is called a sealing sign; or lately it may serve all of these together (I.xxxvi.7). Given that “the understanding” is usually contrasted with “the will,” one might have expected

Ames to have said that sealing signs serve the will. Yet, since Ames argues that the will is the *sine qua non* of faith, he did not need to explicitly name the faculty. Sealing signs, by serving faith, arouse the will to cling to and lean upon the “thing” signified.

This definitional work finally takes the reader to the topic of the sacraments. Signs that seal “the covenant of God” are called sacraments (I.xxxvi.10). In the new covenant, the “thing” signified is “...is the new covenant itself, or Christ himself with all the blessings which are prepared in him for the faithful” (I.xxxvi.23). Although “...some sacraments more expressly represent some dimension or aspect of this covenant than others...” (I.xxxvi.24), *all* the sacraments “...have this in common...they seal the whole covenant of grace to believers” (I.xxxvi.25). Further, “taking the sacraments symbolizes the union we have with God in Christ and the communion we hold with all those who are partakers of the same union, especially with those who are members of the same church” (I.xxxvi.34). Taking the sacraments, and being reminded of the blessings of union with Christ, the will of the believing community is renewed in “...thankfulness and obedience...” (I.xxxvi.31). Ames later explains that the covenant of grace was sealed through sacraments in the Old and New Testaments. In the New Testament, the sacraments are “baptism and the Lord’s Supper” (I.xl.3).

Previously, Ames had dichotomized the means of grace into “the ministry” and “the holy signs.” He then tacked on “ecclesiastical discipline” (I.xxxiii.4). Ames’s discussion of discipline reveals that he considered discipline a crucial aspect of churchly life [“Therefore, discipline is usually associated by the best theologians with the word and sacraments in the marks of the church” (I.xxxvii.3)], and, parenthetically, that Ramist dichotomization did not always serve Ames well. Discipline, like preaching and the

sacraments, had to do with conforming the will of God's people to the will of God.

"Holy discipline is an application of the will of God to persons through censure to guard against offenses or remove them from the church of God" (I.xxxvii.1). While preaching sets forth the will of God "...to beget and increase faith and obedience" and while the sacraments apply the will of God to "...confirm faith and obedience," discipline applies the will of God to "...remove the vices contrary to true faith and obedience" (I.xxxvii.2). Each of these means of grace, by begetting, increasing, confirming and purifying faith, have, by Ames's definition of faith, the human will in view.

Discipline was yet another acknowledgment and provision for manifold Christian weaknesses, "discipline...is a wholesome remedy for the wounds and diseases to which the sheep of Christ are subject, 1 Cor. 5:5" (I.xxxvii.8). Contrasted to human weakness, Christ's kingship (I.xxxvii.10) which "represses sin" (I.xxxvii.13) is involved in discipline, although Ames sadly reported that many churches "refuse to receive the whole kingship of Christ..." (I.xxxvii.11). Finally, discipline, aiming at the renewal and purification of the believer's faith and will, finds its primary expression in "Christian correction," although excommunication is an option. "Discipline consists not only or even chiefly in the thunderbolt of excommunication and anathema, but primarily in Christian correction" (I.xxxvii.15).

Recall from chapter 1 that the "old covenant" was made with Adam, and promised life for obedience and death for disobedience. The "new covenant," discussed earlier in this chapter, provided not only a promise of life, but also provided "...all the *means* of life" (italics mine, I.xxiv.18). Since the human will had lost all ability to do good due to Adam's sin, the old covenant was no longer a viable way of salvation. The

new covenant, or “covenant of grace” was the means by which impotent sinners could be saved by God’s initiative through the application of Christ. Believing the Bible to have one message, Ames argues that the covenant of grace existed *before* the coming of Christ, and is therefore to be found in the Old Testament, as well as the new. Despite this continuity, “...the *manner* of the application of Christ or the administration of the new covenant has not always been so. It has varied...” (I.xxxviii.1, italics mine). Through time, the covenant of grace was declared with more clarity, “...there has always been a progression from the imperfect to the more perfect” (I.xxxviii.2). Initially, “...the mystery of the gospel was manifested in a general and obscure way and later more specifically and clearly (I.xxxviii.3). The manner of the application of Christ is “twofold.” In one dispensation, the administration of the covenant “...points to the Christ who will appear...” while the other administration points “...to the Christ who has appeared” (I.xxxviii.4). “The Old and New Testaments are reducible to these two primary heads. The Old promises Christ to come and the New testifies that he has come” (I.xxxviii.5). Ames then attempts to show that the application of Christ can be found throughout the Old Testament. Admittedly, administration of the covenant of grace was “rude and loose” before Moses (I.xxxviii.12), but “from Adam to Abraham” the gospel of Christ was nevertheless proclaimed through the promise that the seed of the woman would crush the head of Satan in Gen. 3 (I.xxxviii.14). During this time, the benefits of the application of Christ, i.e., calling, justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification were all proclaimed (I.xxxviii.14-18). “From the time of Abraham...” (I.xxxviii.20), the “benefits of the new covenant were all more clearly and distinctly witnessed to than before” (I.xxxviii.21). Again, election, redemption, calling,

justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification were all present (I.xxxviii.22-28). Similarly, from the time of Moses to Christ, redemption, justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification were all “set forth” (I.xxxviii.29-35).

After the appearance of Christ, the covenant of grace is administered in two dispensations, “...the one lasting until the end of the world and the other at the end itself.” (I.xxxix.1). The term “New Testament” has to do with the new administration of the covenant (I.xxxix.2), and so the New Testament is not new in essence, but only in form (I.xxxix.4), and has greater “clarity and freedom” than the Old (I.xxxix.6). The present administration of the covenant of grace includes freedom from the Old Testament ceremonial law which “forbade the use of some things in their nature indifferent...and [thereby] veiled the truth...” (I.xxxix.9). Further, “the application of the Spirit is more effectual and the gifts of the Spirit more perfect than they were ordinarily in the Old Testament” (I.xxxix.12). The present administration is also no longer confined to “any one people” (I.xxxix.13). Given the perfection of this administration, “...it follows that the communion of saints in the church instituted according to the New Testament should be most perfect” (I.xxxix.14).

The administration of the covenant of grace is, of course, through the church, and “...a particular church should not consist of more members than may meet together in one place to hear the word of God, celebrate the sacraments, offer prayers, exercise discipline, and perform other duties of divine polity as one body” (I.xxxix.18). Given this primacy of the covenant community, Ames found the practice ““in some larger cities” of housing too many believers in one church abhorrent. In these cases, “...there

are more believers than can hold communion together. It is a gross error leading to all sorts of confusion not to distribute them into several churches...” (I.xxxix.19).

In defense of a congregational polity, Ames challenges not only the Roman church (I.xxxix.20), but any “...national, provincial, or diocesan” form of government. “These forms were introduced by man from the pattern of civil government, especially Roman.” The biblical pattern is “...a parochial church or a church of one congregation; the members are united with each other and ordinarily meet in one place for the public exercise of religion” (I.xxxix.22). It is this local, contained unit that “...is properly signified by the word...church.” The New Testament does not give the word “a broader meaning...when it refers to a visible designated company” (I.xxxix.23). Therefore, “established congregations in the same country and province are [in the New Testament] ...always called churches in the plural, never one church... (I.xxxix.24). And, although in the New Testament particular churches came together (I.xxxix.25), “nothing is read in all the New Testament about the establishment of any larger church upon which lesser congregations depend...” (I.xxxix.26). Ames thereby discards Presbyterianism. Nevertheless, “...particular churches...may and often should enter into covenant relationship and mutual association in classes and synods in order to enjoy common agreement and mutual help...but this combination does not constitute a new form of church...” (I.xxxix.27).

Given the equality and autonomy of individual churches, ordinary ministers are “elders of one congregation” not bishops of churches (I.xxxix.28), and are all equal (I.xxxix.29). The right of calling a minister is on the congregational level (I.xxxix.30),

and “Episcopal ordination of a minister...without a church to which and in which he may be ordained is as ridiculous as trying to imagine a husband without a wife” (I.xxxix.35).

God’s provision for the whole church and all of human nature is manifested in the government of the local congregation. “Ordinary ministers are either pastors and teachers or ruling elders with whom are associated those who take care of the poor, namely deacons, deaconesses, or widows” (I.xxxix.37). The structuring of these offices is as if God had designed at least one office for each faculty of the soul:

By these offices Christ has sufficiently provided for all the necessities of the members of the church, so that they may be instructed in the knowledge of the truth especially by the teachers, stirred up to the practice of piety chiefly by the pastors, preserved in the course of life and called back to repentance for sins by them and the ruling elders, and helped in their poverty by the deacons” (I.xxxix.38).

Given that the pastors were charged with inflaming the will through preaching, and that the will is the principle subject of theology, the pastor occupied the highest position in the church.

The End of the World and the Perfection of the Will

Ames closes the first part of the Marrow appropriately enough, by discussing “the end of the world.” The perfection of the administration of the covenant of grace, “...requires the coming and personal presence of Christ himself...” (I.xli.9). Ames here outlines better-known aspects of Christian theology. The second coming of Christ, which will be “...attended with the greatest glory and power...” (I.xli.10), will be followed by the separation of the godly and the ungodly (I.xli.11), and body and soul will be

resurrected (I.xli.12). A “...sentence of life for the elect will be given according to their works, not as meritorious causes but as effects testifying to the true causes” (I.xli.26), and a “... sentence of death for reprobates will be given according to their works as true causes” (I.xli.27). “After the day of judgment Christ will remain king and mediator forever” (I.xli.34).

Ames also outlines lesser-known but more relevant aspects of Christian theology having to do with the end of the world. At the end of the world, the benefits of the application of Christ will reach their end. “...The end of calling will be reached by all who are called, for we are called to the eternal glory of god, 1 Peter 5:10” (I.xli.2). The justification of the elect will be completed in that “the sins of the faithful will not come into judgment. In this life they are covered and taken away by the sentence of justification...It would not be right that they should again be brought to light” (I.xli.22). Adoption will be manifested as the elect take “...possession of their inheritance...” (I.xli.4). Concerning sanctification, “...the image of God will be perfected in all the sanctified...” (I.xli.5). At creation, God denied this perfection to human beings, reserving it for the son of God only (I.viii.68). At the end of the world, however, Ames seems to argue that the elect, united to the perfect Son of God, attain to a perfection denied them even at creation. And, since the image of God has to do with possessing “...the faculties whereby [the soul] has freedom in its actions in the understanding and the will...” and also possessing “...gifts whereby man is rendered able and fit to live well...” This renewal is not for the soul only. At the end of the world, glorification will “...shine forth in all fullness, not only in the soul but also in the very body...” (I.xli.6). The end of the world marks a new and glorious beginning for the Christian pilgrim. Finally, the

Christian is able to freely and perfectly walk in “wisdom, holiness, and righteousness” (I.viii.73).

Summary and Conclusion

Ames believed that the fall of Adam put human beings into a state of moral helplessness. Created to love and serve God, the human race now lacks the moral ability to do these very things. This sorry state was no surprise to God, who had from eternity past planned to redeem some of these sinners from their bondage. A crucial part of that redemption was to release the human will from its captivity to sin. Since redemption could not be accomplished by morally impotent sinners, a savior was needed, Jesus Christ.

Prior to the appearance of Jesus Christ, the Son of God existed as a member of the eternal Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This Son of God took flesh in the form of Jesus Christ, was perfect in intellect and will, and therefore held the promise of restoration of the human will. Christ came to fulfill the roles of a prophet, a priest and a king. One of the aspects of his kingly “office” was to rescue the elect from its powerlessness and bondage to sin.

There were certain other prerequisites for Christ to effect the moral transformation of the elect. Christ, the Son of God, was humiliated for the sake of the elect, undergoing the miseries of this life *in their place*. In addition to assuming human form, he satisfied divine justice by dying the cursed death of the cross. But Christ was also exalted, being raised from the dead, and ascending into heaven. All of these things he did for the glory of God and the salvation of the elect. Because Christ was punished,

the elect will not be punished. Because Christ was raised from the dead, the elect will be raised from the dead, etc.

Yet, none of these things that Christ did for the elect actually help to transform the elect (including their wills) until Christ is “applied” to them. This application does not depend upon men’s free wills (for there is no such thing), but is initiated by God. Unlike Adam, who had to rely on his own strength to maintain favor with God, the elect rely on Christ’s strength and the certainty of his everlasting acceptance with God. Here again the glory of God is brought to the fore, and the weakness of humanity is highlighted.

The God of the Puritan Bible was a God of predestination, choosing from eternity past those to whom he would apply Christ. The predestination of God reveals the initiative and superiority of God. Since no sinner deserves this grace, the choice is entirely up to God. Still, predestination does not change the will of the elect. The actual change in the will and understanding of the elect begins with “calling,” or when the gospel of Christ is preached and the sinner is by grace given a new will to respond to that preached message. What happens in the call is that the helpless sinner is united to the exalted and perfected Christ. The union is first passive, so that the Godward inclination of Christ is given to the sinner’s will. Passively united to Christ, the sinner actively embraces this Christ for the first time. Thus possessed of a new will, the believer turns away from sin in repentance. Further, once united to Christ, a series of blessings accrue to the believer. First, the believer is accepted and pardoned by God, i.e., justified, not because of any change wrought in them, but because of Christ’s merit only. Second, since united to the Son of God, the believer is “adopted” as a child of God as well. Third, union with Christ leads to a progressive “sanctification” and renewal, which includes an

imperfect but increasing holiness in the “heart” and will. Fourth, those united to Christ will to some extent in this life, and perfectly in the next, taste of the perfection that Christ purchased for them. A large part of that perfection is the perfection of their now sinful wills.

Ames moved on to a consideration of the church, or the community of the faith. Divinely ordained means of preserving the Puritan story through community are detailed here. Directions for beginning individual churches are given. The job description of the minister is elaborated, and Ames places great stress on the duty of the minister to move the hearts and wills of his congregation through preaching. Preaching tips designed to achieve that end are disclosed. The sacraments are described as “sealing signs” which are designed to increase the faith (and therefore wills) of the elect. The different offices of the church are described, and we learn that the office of pastor is especially designed with the wills of the membership in mind.

Finally, Ames closed the first Book of the Marrow with a consideration of the end of the world in which the souls of the elect, intellect and will, are perfected for all time.

Ames, having disclosed the manner in which God restores the dignity of efficiently to his creature, closes Book One of the Marrow of Theology on a positive note. Still, Ames did not believe that the restoration of the saints’ efficiency was an end in itself. God united his people to his Son so that they may *observe* his commandments. So, in the next chapter we consider Book Two of the Marrow, in which Ames describes the basic principles of “observance,” or the duties which God requires of humanity, particularly redeemed humanity. In so doing we gain insight into Ames’s understanding of how a godly mind, particularly a godly will, worked.

CHAPTER III

THE MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF SAINTS

At the beginning of the Marrow, Ames claimed that theology is “the doctrine or teaching of living to God” (I.i.1), and, since *living* involves human action, “the first and proper subject of theology is the will” (I.i.9). The entire first Book of the Marrow (chapters one and two) bears out these assertions. Beginning with the primacy and efficiency of God’s will and the defacing of the human will through Adam’s sin (chapter 1), Ames then discussed the way God renews the human will through the application of Christ in redemption. Yet something is still incomplete. In Book One, Ames discusses the prolegomena, the necessary requirements, of “living to God,” but he does not specify what living to God looks like. That is the purpose of the second book of the Marrow, to discuss the duties that God calls the redeemed to perform. Not surprisingly, Ames has much more to say about the will in this context as well.

Observance and Will

Having discussed “faith in God” in Book One, Ames moves to discuss “the remaining part,” which is *observance* (II.i.1). Just as the will of God initiated and designed the redemption of the elect, the will of God once again takes center stage. Observance “...holds the will of God as a pattern and rule...” (II.i.2). Given all that Ames had said about the sovereignty of God, he makes an important qualification. The will of God in view here is not God’s “...secret, effectual, ordaining...” will, because “...all creatures...do the will of God [in that sense].” Rather, the will of God Ames is

concerned with here is God's *moral* will, or "...the will of God which prescribes our duty..." (II.i.3).

The human will, once again, moves to center stage. First, the *posture* of the human will is involved in observance. Enlisting the human will to *serve* (II.i.6) the divine will necessarily "...means our will is *Submissive*..." to God. The demarcation between obedience and disobedience is also found in the posture of the will. An action can be called obedient when the will "...is made ready to bring the command of God, which has been heard or in some way perceived, into execution" (II.i.5). An obedient will is also eager and cheerful to do God's will (II.i.36), and is zealous for God (II.i.37). Secondly, the *goal* of the human will is involved: "Observance applies our will to accomplish the will of God..." (II.i.4). Finally, observance affirms the *primacy* (in terms of importance) of the human will: "The principal subject of observance is the will, as it is in living faith. Phil. 2:13, *It is God that works in you, both to will and to do*" (II.i.35).

Obedience brings about the highest form of human existence, for "from this submission to the will of God comes a necessary conformity of the will of God and ours. Rev. 2:6..." To will what God wills is to be an "image of divine perfection..." (II.i.8), and to partake of "*holiness* because it takes the pure form and shape of God's will" (II.i.9). Observance also restores the original *telos* of life, looking always "...to the glory of God..." (II.i.10), leaning always "toward God" as its end (II.i.12).

This *source* of this obedience is paradoxical. Clearly, for Ames the Adamic will cannot obey God. Obedience issues from the redeemed will only, yet this will is continually assisted by divine grace. "The principle efficient cause of observance as an inner, abiding principle is indirectly faith and directly sanctifying grace" (II.i.13). In

Ames's thinking both faith and sanctifying grace are found in the redeemed soul, particularly the redeemed will.

Faith itself is an act of the will. It may be recalled from chapter 1, faith always includes the understanding, yet it is not a "mere act of the intellect." Rather, the thing differentiating an act of mere "assent to evidence" and true faith is the will (I.iii.2). Since it is the will of the believer, faith must be considered the *believer's* action. Ames makes a similar point when contrasting faith and observance early in Marrow. Faith and observance are "...distinguished in the order of nature, so that faith holds the first place and spiritual observance the second, for no vital actions or life are forthcoming except where there is an inborn principle of life" (I.ii.5). In other words, faith originates *in the believer*, through an "inborn principle of life." This inborn principle refers to the passive reception of Christ, discussed in chapter two, wherein "a spiritual principle of grace is generated in the will of man" (II.xxvi.21). This "inborn principle of life" is roughly equivalent to the "sanctifying grace" mentioned above, which "...is the very power by which we are lifted up to accommodate our will to the will of God." The fact that this grace is a property of the renewed soul is evidenced by Ames's reference to "the new man and the new creature, Eph. 4:24; Gal. 6:15" (II.i.16), which have to do with the regenerated soul, or "the restoration of the image or life of God in man" (I.xxix.24).

On the other hand, obedience flows directly from God. In Book One, Ames argued that "...the final dependence of faith, as it designates the act of believing, is on the operation and inner persuasion of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:3, *No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit*" (I.iii.12). Similarly, Ames argues that faith results in obedience by drawing upon a power outside of itself:

Faith brings forth obedience in three ways. First it apprehends Christ who is the fountain of life and the spring of all power to do well; second, it receives and acquiesces in the arguments which God has set forth in Scripture to induce obedience, namely, promises and threatenings; third, it has power to obtain all grace, especially that grace which occasions obedience. (II.i.15)

So obedience flows from *within* the believer, yet in three ways obedience is said to flow from a source *outside* the believer. First, Christ is the “fountain” and “spring” of this obedience, second, Scripture is required to move the will, and third, the will through faith must look outside of itself to “induce obedience.” Ames pulls together the two poles of this paradox (i.e., that the will is the source of obedience, and God is the source of obedience) in one statement: “For since sin came, man cannot of himself do anything acceptable to God...except it be done in Christ through faith and sanctifying grace. John 15:4, 5, *Without me you can do nothing*” (II.i.17). Faith and sanctifying grace, as shown above, belong somehow to the believer’s soul, yet the exercise these abilities is considered evidence, as Christ said, that apart from him the believer has no spiritual ability whatsoever.

The point is not trivial. The Puritans were concerned with avoiding two spiritual dangers, and used this paradox in an attempt to avoid these dangers. The first danger was *perceived autonomy*. The Puritans insisted that God was the source of all good. If they held only to the idea that believers possess an autonomous “spiritual principle of grace” (even if granted that this principle is given by God) this could lead to the dangerous assumption that dependence upon God’s help was *no longer* necessary in obedience. This assumption would lead to human arrogance and undermine God’s glory. The

second danger was *passivity*. The importance of obedient observance of God's will is central to Ames's theology. If the Puritans simply stressed dependence upon God's intervention, they may simply have been tempted to "wait around" until God zapped them into action. The paradox¹⁸ is succinctly summarized in St. Paul's assertion "I worked...yet not I" (1 Cor. 10:15).

Obedience requires more than a renewed will sustained by divine assistance, however. In order for the human will to conform itself to the divine will, it also needs to *know* what this will is, "Knowledge of this will is necessary for true obedience..." (II.i.25). This will is simply summarized in the ten commandments, or "...the decalogue" (II.i.20). Before turning to the explication of this will of God, he reminds his readers, once again, of the paradox of observance, albeit from a slightly different angle:

Our obedience is not the chief or meritorious cause of eternal life. For by grace we receive both the right to this life and also the life itself as a gift of God through Christ apprehended by faith...Yet our obedience is in a certain way the ministering, helping, or furthering cause of possessing this life (the right to which we have already been given), and in this sense it is called the way by which we walk to heaven..." (II.i.30)

In other words, the Christian does not obey God *for* salvation, but rather obeys *from* salvation. And yet obeying *from* salvation also serves to *further* salvation. And, Ames adds, although this obedience is flawed by the sin remaining in the believer, it is still

¹⁸I think Pahl (1992) is right to highlight the importance of Paradox in debate over the will, yet I think he may actually misrepresent the true nature of this paradox. Determinism and indeterminism were not the poles of the paradox. Rather, divine and human determinism were the poles.

graciously accepted by God because of the believer's union and identification with Christ, the *only* fully obedient human (II.i.32).

“There are two elements in observance: virtue and virtuous action...” (II.ii.1).

“Virtue is a condition or habit [*habitus*] by which the will is inclined to do well” (II.ii.4).

This is “...distinguished from a vicious habit which inclines men towards evil, Rom. 7:17, 20, 23” (II.ii.8). Virtuous habits do not render the “constitution of mind” perfect in any way, but rather signify “a general state of mind” or “disposition.” People differ in terms of the relative “perfection” of their habits (II.ii.5). A habit “...makes the subject behave in a certain manner, i.e., it moves the faculty, which otherwise would not be so moved, toward good” (II.ii.6).

Ames is very concerned with demonstrating that virtue is found in the will, giving eight reasons why this is so. First, since theology is the doctrine of living to God, and the will is “...the true beginning of life and of spiritual action,” it follows that “...the will is the true subject of theology...” Since virtue is an inclination to moral *action* and therefore an important part of “living to God,” it follows that virtue is located in the will (II.ii.7).

Second, since “...the will is that faculty which is truly carried toward a worthy good, Rom. 7:19, 21,” and virtue is an inclination toward good, it follows that virtue has to do most especially with the will. Third, virtue is “...an elective habit, whose direct function is voluntary choice.” Fourth, since “...the will commends [sic] the other faculties...” virtue must belong to the will in order to influence these other faculties. Fifth, the will does not in itself incline to the good¹⁹, nor does reason assure that it will

¹⁹ This reminds me of Edwards' assertion that there is no self-determining will. Implied is the idea that the will is still the will even when it is governed by habit. WJ would say that it isn't volitional any longer.

move toward the good. Therefore, the will “...needs its own internal disposition to work correctly.” Sixth, the other faculties, being “...subject to outside compulsion...” could lose the virtue within them apart from the action of the will. The implication of the idea that virtue could be lost apart from the choice of the agent is that moral responsibility would be overturned. Seventh, praise for moral behavior is ascribed to both the will and to virtue, and so they must be related to each other. Finally, the intellect “...cannot be the subject of virtue because intellectual habits, though most perfect, do not make a man good.” Similarly, the “sensory appetite” cannot “...be the subject [of virtue] because true virtue is found in the angels whose souls are separated from bodies, thus being void of appetite.” Yet, since the sensory appetite “...often possess some dispositions which make it possible for the will commanding rightly to be more easily obeyed...these dispositions partly resemble virtue” (II.ii.7).

The person possessing “...true and solid virtues...” is indeed a good person. Yet, given the redemption outlined in chapter 2, “...the very dispositions within us...” are not what renders the believer “...acceptable to God...” (II.ii.9). Rather, the status of goodness is given by grace through union with Christ in the declaration of justification. Still, the justified sinner also has virtue through this union with Christ. Against an intellectualistic notion of virtue, Ames argued that Biblical virtue is opposed to “...those virtues often called intellectual...” (II.ii.11). “Virtue... is also distinguished from the [intellectual] perfections of the mind which surely bring light whereby the will may direct itself toward well doing, but which do not incline it to do right” (II.ii.8). Although the intellect may

Ames is a bit inconsistent on this point. “Virtue... is also distinguished from the perfections of the mind which surely bring light whereby the will may direct itself toward well doing, but which do not incline it to do right.” (II.ii.8)

rightly apprehend the right course of action, only a virtuous inclination will actually produce the right action.

Ames takes aim at “pagan” moral philosophy. The Bible *alone* is to direct the Christian life: “...the sole rule in all matters which have to do with the direction of life is the revealed will of God” (II.ii.13). Aristotle’s argument that “...the judgment of prudent men is the rule for virtue,” is a fallible standard, for there are no people “under whose judgment we might always stand...” (II.ii.14). “Right reason” is also to be found in the Scriptures alone since the autonomous human mind produces only “imperfect notions” of virtue (II.ii.15). Ames’s conclusion is consistent and bold: “Therefore, there can be no other teaching of the virtues than theology which brings the whole revealed will of God to the directing of our reason, will, and life” (II.ii.16). Since the Bible alone is the infallible guide for right living, Ames also challenges the arguments for a separation of ethics and theology (II.ii.17). Theology is an all-pervasive system, and does not need augmentation from “pagan” sources. The following oft-quoted passage in praise of Peter Ramus, nicely summarizes the perceived risks associated with using Aristotle as a philosophy text (as was the practice at Harvard and its British counterparts; see Fiering, 1981):

The judgment and desire of that great master of the arts, Peter Ramus, was no less pious than prudent: “If I could wish for what I wanted, I had rather that philosophy were taught to children out of the gospel by a learned theologian of proved character than out of Aristotle by a philosopher. A child will learn many impieties from Aristotle which, it is to be feared, he will unlearn too late. He will learn, for example, that the beginning of blessedness arises out of man; that the

end of blessedness lies in man; that all virtues *are within man's power* and obtainable by man's nature, art, and industry; that God is never present in such works; either as helper or author, however great and divine they are; that divine providence is removed from the theater of human life; that not a word can be spoken about divine justice; that man's blessedness is based on this frail life" (II.ii.18, italics mine).

Nothing could have been more contrary to the Puritan notion of virtue than the allegedly Aristotelian affirmation "that all virtues are within man's power and obtainable by man's nature, art, and industry." Ames was jealous to affirm the idea that all power is God's. As we shall see, however, post-Puritan American mental philosophy and psychology would move tend to move in this "Aristotelian" direction, affirming that human beings do posses an inherent power to do the right thing. Yet, as we shall also see, this affirmation became increasingly strained in the late nineteenth century, when the study of physiology once again affirmed the limitations of human freedom and ability.

Ames similarly engages in a somewhat extended refutation of the Aristotelian idea that virtue is "...the mean between two extremes," arguing that such a notion is indefensible (II.ii.35). He also includes a simple scriptural refutation: "It is obvious that the mean has no place in some virtues. The love of God is to be praised not when it is not too much, but when it is most ardent" (II.ii.38).

The paradox of Christian obedience is reiterated in terms of virtue. "The same habit which is called virtue in that it inclines towards God in this way is also called a gift, for it is given by God and inspired by the Holy Spirit. And it is called grace because it is freely bestowed on us by the special favor of God" (II.ii.19). Virtue is a *human*

possession, located in a human will and therefore located in some sense in the human heart. Yet, since this habit is itself “given by God and inspired by the Holy Spirit,” *God* must also be considered the origin of human goodness. Relatedly, Ames addresses the issue of habit formation through “daily use and exercise.” Here too the paradox of simultaneous human and divine activity arises:

It is often said that virtues are increased by daily use and exercise. This applies to true virtues which proceed from sanctifying grace; daily use can be called their disposing cause and, because of the promise of God, in a way their procuring cause. But use does not in principle or properly produce an increase of virtue.

(II.ii.42)

Although “sanctifying grace” is given by the initiative of God only (I.xxvi.21), human activity is involved in “procuring” this grace. Yet the procured grace is still gift, and therefore human activity cannot be understood to “produce” the grace of virtue. These affirmations also stand in contrast to the psychologies of Upham and James. In these psychologies, which argued (to differing extents) for autonomous human activity, repetition and “daily use” were seen as fool-proof techniques to bring about the desired moral results. Mention of human dependency on God dissipated.

The Psychology of Good Works

Ames’s discussion of “good works” is intensely psychological, and may rightly deserve the title “moral psychology,” since he specifies the psychological characteristics of moral action. Acts of virtue, which are acts that flow “from the disposition of virtue. Matt. 12:35, *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things*” (II.iii.1), are equated with acts that are called “...good, right, laudable, and pleasing to

God” (II.iii.2). These good actions have several requirements, all of which are crucial for understanding Ames’s moral psychology. First, virtuous action requires “...a good efficient cause or beginning, i.e., a well-disposed will working from true virtue. For good fruit does not grow except on a good tree, Matt. 12:33.” Given that Ames defines virtue as “...a condition or habit [*habitus*] by which the will is inclined to do well” (II.ii.4), it is not surprising that he finds volition to be central to moral action. His definition also parallels Edwards’ assertion that indifference is incompatible with moral activity (as we will see in chapter 4). The second crucial characteristic of Ames’s moral psychology is “...a good matter or object, namely, something commanded by God. Matt. 15:9, *In vain they worship me, teaching doctrines which are the commandments of men.*” The primacy of the object is once again affirmed by Ames.

These first two requirements of moral activity bring subject and object together. A moral act is one that has normative requirements for both subject and object, i.e., the will (the subject) needs to be “good” as does the object. This subjective and objective normativity would eventually be dismissed from psychological thinking during the advent of the New Psychology, and may be a major element of the loss of will in American psychology. Nevertheless, the importance of the subject/object distinction would continue to be a crucial one in psychological thought throughout the period studied in this dissertation, even in the New Psychology of William James.

The third characteristic of a good action shares similar continuities and discontinuities with the psychological thought that would develop in American textbooks. This characteristic of good action is “...a good end—or the glory of God and whatever redounds to his glory. 1 Cor. 10:31, *Do all to the glory of God*” (II.iii.3). By way of

continuity, teleological considerations in human activity would continue to remain central considerations. William James would ironically speak of “the gradually growing conviction that mental life is primarily teleological” (James, 1892, p. 4) in his Psychology: Briefer Course. By way of discontinuity, the notion that there is a *normative* telos to mental life would become increasingly problematic.

Ames brings these three elements of his moral psychology (i.e., will, object and telos) together in asserting that “...the end and the object in both good and evil acts often coincide, especially in the intention and choice of the will where the end is itself the proper object.” Acts such as these either have the end “as matter or object” or these acts are directed to things related to the end. In the former case, when the end is the object, acts are occasioned by “...desiring, willing, wishing, loving, and enjoying.” Whether the end is the object, or the object is “related” to the end, teleology is *always* involved in virtuous action. “To be truly good an action must be referred to God as the chief end, at least in effect” (II.iii.6).

A fourth requirement of virtuous action is “...a pattern or good standard...” Actions that accord with “...the revealed will of God” (II.iii.7) are therefore virtuous. Conscience, the intellectual faculty that apprehends the will of God may be considered “...a secondary standard for moral actions.” Good actions comport with “...a right conscience”, while “...an erring or doubtful conscience...” can be violated only after serious consideration (II.iii.8). Nevertheless, since a good conscience is necessarily shaped by the word of God, it is implied that conscience alone is not a sufficient guide for moral activity (see Cases of Conscience; Ames, 1643, III.17.20).

The goodness or badness of an action also depends upon “circumstances.” “An individual action is always surrounded by circumstances upon which the goodness or evil of it greatly depends” (II.iii.9). Ames seems to use the term circumstances in the way we might use it today, to denote the specificities or peculiarities of a given situation or person, rather than universal characteristics of situations or persons. The circumstances related to voluntary action “...take on the nature of the object.” Ames elaborates: “For when the will takes some action, it wills *all that is involved* in the action and thus includes all known circumstances, expressly or implicitly. And when a known circumstance is changed, the act of the will is often changed” (II.iii.10). A possible example of this that Ames does not give might be a Puritan man who chooses to go to church knowing that a potential business contact will be at the church. This is an important circumstance (i.e., an idiosyncratic, non-universal situation) that becomes part of the object chosen. In choosing to go to church, the person is choosing also to meet a business contact. By implication, the object itself and its moral status has somehow changed in the process of changing circumstances. This is not the case concerning other faculties of the soul. Circumstances take the nature of an object with regard to the will, but they remain “only adjuncts” for the other faculties (II.iii.11).

Since the object of the will is “all that is involved in the action and thus...all known circumstances...”, the “end” or final purpose of an action may be included in the object of the will. So, incorporating the frequently used example of “the drunkard,” Ames might say that the object of the drunkard’s will is more than merely drinking, but also includes “the end” of this drinking, which may be the removal of unpleasant psychic states. The inclusion of the end in the object differentiates the will from the other

faculties of the soul. The end of an action is included in the object of the will, but is *not* included in the object of other faculties. This means that the final purpose or end of an act remains merely circumstantial to these other faculties, that is, the circumstances are “only adjuncts” (II.iii.11). Removing unpleasantness may be the object of the will, but it is not the object of the understanding, which simply specifies²⁰ the bottle or glass to be grasped. “So the end itself is correctly considered a circumstance so far as the other faculties and their acts are concerned, though this is not true for the will” (II.iii.12). For the will, “the end itself” takes the nature of an object.

Ames classifies actions as good (that is, directly prescribed by the word of God, or deduced from the command of God), evil (i.e., prohibited by the word of God), and *indifferent* (i.e., actions neither commanded nor prohibited). An indifferent act occurs “...when its object includes nothing which involves the commanding or forbidding will of God” (II.iii.14). For example, loving neighbor is good, stealing is bad, but walking down the road is indifferent. Yet, even though “...many acts are indifferent, in their own nature, or in general, the circumstances make each individual, moral, and deliberate act either good or evil” (II.iii.13). Even indifferent acts “...are either directed to the proper end of conformity to the will of God, and thus are good; or they are not rightly directed, differ from the will of God, and are thus evil” (II.iii.14). The fact that actions have an ultimate purpose is a characteristic of “truly human” actions which are “...done in deliberate reason” (II.iii.14). Further, Ames insists that the end of our activities must ultimately be conformity to God’s will. Again, the teleological nature of human activity

²⁰The understanding’s role in volition is limited to specification. See Cases of Conscience (Ames, 1643).

would be preserved in the New Psychology, while the normativity of Ames psychology would be made more difficult in the nonsectarian secular context.

Ames's comments on acts that "have an evil sound" helps to further clarify his meaning of the distinction between circumstances and object. Besides actions which are good, evil, and indifferent, some distinguish acts which are said to "have an evil sound." Considered by themselves they have in them a certain lawlessness, but under certain circumstances they appear to be good, e.g., the killing of a man and the like. But such acts ought to be classified as indifferent, for they only seem to contain evil. To free a man from danger of death, for instance, seems to be good in itself, but many who are not evil are herein deceived, for the true goodness or wickedness of it in such action depends upon the circumstances [e.g., innocent or guilty] and the object [killing, i.e. good, evil or indifferent]. To slay the innocent or set at liberty the guilty is evil, but to slay the guilty justly or to deliver the innocent upon just reason is good (II.iii.15). So "circumstances" include the characteristics that make one person different from another, or one situation different from another.

The works of the regenerate are never "absolutely good," because "all [the]...causes and conditions [i.e., the object, the end, the circumstances] must together be good to make an act absolutely good. A defect in *any* of them makes the act evil to that extent" (II.iii.16). Ames clearly advocates the possibility and even the inevitability of mixed motives in human volition in this passage. This has bearing upon the discussion of Jonathan Edwards, for he has been accused of leaving no room for mixed motives in his psychology. If this contention is true, he would represent a significant departure from Ames on this point.

Given the present imperfect dispensation of redemption, “our good works while we live here are, therefore, imperfect and impure in themselves” (II.iii.17). Given these imperfections, these works are acceptable to God only “in Christ” (II.iii.18), and do not merit reward “...on the basis of justice” (II.iii.19). Nevertheless, reward is given, by grace (II.iii.20).

Ames distinguishes outward vs. inward acts of virtue (II.iii.21). While “the inward act belongs to the will itself” (II.iii.22), “the outward act belongs to a faculty *other than the will*, whether it is the understanding or the sensory appetite (commonly called internal), or the performing power (usually called external)” (II.iii.23). This “performing power” would be roughly equivalent to “motor activity.”

Goodness and badness inhere in acts of will, which are by definition internal: “The internal action of the will has a goodness or evil so intrinsic that an act cannot maintain its nature without maintaining its manners.” Ames clarifies what he means by “manners” while describing the difference from outward acts: “An outward act, however, may remain one thing in nature and yet change in manner, evil becoming good or good becoming evil, as if one should begin to walk for an honest purpose but persist in his journey to an evil end” (II.iii.24). So “manners” have to do with goodness and badness. Acts of will are therefore intrinsically good or bad, while acts of other faculties are not. The same act of will cannot be good in one circumstance and bad in another. A good will is a good will a bad will is a bad will. Outward acts are not intrinsically good or bad. “Walking” may be good or evil, depending upon the underlying will. “The outward act without the inward is properly neither good nor evil. But the inward can be good or evil without the external, because the goodness of the act depends first and chiefly upon the

will, and this is often acceptable to God, although the outward deed is lacking, 2 Cor. 8:12, *If there is first a ready mind, one is accepted according to what he has*” (II.iii.26). In addition to affirming the primacy of the interior, these passages also confirm that the will was considered a moral faculty of the soul.

Despite Ames’s division of acts into internal and external, he still maintained the organic unity of human activity. The (good or evil) internal act sets the external act in motion, but these two acts are nevertheless a unity: “It is one act in manner. For to will to worship God and to worship God because of that will are not two acts of obedience, but two phases of one and the same act; the goodness of the one continues in the other. 2 Cor. 8:10, 11, *Do that very thing...that your readiness to will may be matched by performance*” (II.iii.25). Despite the unity of the inward and outward act, Ames maintains the interiority of the will, and, by implication, the interiority of behavioral causation. Although it is possible that the internal act may exist without the external (II.iii.26), internal acts “...tend toward the external” (II.iii.27). The primacy of the will in the determination of the ethical quality of action is further affirmed by Ames’s assertion that the outward manifestation of the inner will *completes* the will’s activity, but it does not make the activity more moral: “Still the external act joined with the internal does not properly and by itself increase its good or evil, so far as intention is concerned, but it serves as an accident [*per accidens*], continuing or increasing the act of the will itself” (II.iii.28). The will therefore acts even before the outward “behavior” is manifested, and the goodness or badness of the act precedes the outward manifestation, and does not even require an outward expression.

Ames made a distinction between acts which “depend upon the object” and those acts which depend “upon the end.” The issue here appears to be *motives*. Is the object (and the corresponding circumstances) itself the driving motive in a given activity, or is the goal of the actor primary? The reason for this distinction is that the location of the morality of the action depends upon the type of motive. In the following quote, Ames argues that the morality of actions motivated primarily by the object (and its circumstances) depends upon the nature of the object. Still, the execution of the act depends upon the will:

The good or evil of any act which depends upon the object [prohibited, commanded or indifferent] and the [good or bad] circumstances of the act is by its nature in the external [i.e., in the object and circumstances, which are outside of the will] before it is in the internal, although in order of existence it is first in the internal. To will to give everyone his own is thus good because giving [i.e., an external act, first by nature] itself is good, but the goodness exists in the act of willing [internally] before the act of giving [externally]. It is evil to will [internally] to steal [an external act] because stealing is [objectively] evil. In intention the exterior act is the cause of the inward, but in execution the inward act is the cause of the outward. (II.iii.29)

Contrasted to this are actions motivated by the end or goal of the actor. In these cases the morality of the act depends upon the internal purpose of the actor:

The good or evil which depends upon the end [e.g., the glory of God, or self-aggrandizement] is first in the inward act and then in the outward [i.e., the glory of God is not an *object* to be willed]. The very intention to reach the end is the

inward act of the will. Thus to forsake the world for righteousness' sake is good because it is good to will righteousness, and to give alms for vainglory is evil because it is evil to will vainglory. (II.iii.30)

Just as the inward act of the will may exist without an outward manifestation, "...inward observance..." may exist "...without the outward..." and is nevertheless "...true observance, although incomplete." Ames outlines two ways an inward act may occur without the outward. First, the person possessing the "effectual will" may lack opportunity of executing the internal will. Second, the person may lack ability of executing (perhaps, to put the issue in Edwardsean language, through constraint or some other "natural inability"). In either case, the inward observance "...is not less acceptable to God than if it were joined by an external act, 2 Cor. 8:12" (II.iii.32). But, if occasion and ability *do* exist, "...inward obedience is not sufficient by itself because the whole man ought to subject himself to God." There is no "...inward obedience when there is no inclination to the external" (II.iii.34). An act lacking "inclination to the external" is therefore not an act of will. Conversely, external action is not a sufficient condition for virtue: "observance which appears in outward actions without the inward is hypocrisy and is not observance in actual deed but a shadow of it" (II.iii.31).

As one might expect, Ames draws a moral conclusion to this line of psychologizing: "...we must not judge actions to be good or evil by the event." Given human limitation, it is true that a "...judge of offenses among men [should] be inclined favorably if the event itself is favorable... Yet before the tribunal of God the inward sin is as great, other things being equal, when neither event nor outward act follow, as when both follow. Matt. 5:28, *Whoever looks upon a woman to lust after her has already*

committed adultery with her in his heart” (II.iii.33). Interiority is primary not only in the causation of human behavior, but also in the moral quality of human action.

The Institutional Foundations of Will: Religion

Ames divided “observance” into “...religion or justice” (II.iv.1), arguing that “this division is made by God in substance in the parts of the decalogue, as explained by Christ, Matt. 2:37” (II.iv.2). The Christian virtues of “holiness” and “righteousness” correspond to these two aspects of observance, as does “...the division between love for God and love for neighbor” (II.iv.3). Ames focuses on the former duty, because “...the duties of religion are primary and the most important...” (II.iv.9). Given the gravity of religious duties, they “...are to be cared for above all others. Matt. 10:37, *He that loves father or mother above me is not worthy of me*” (II.iv.12) and should be “...performed with more intensity and dedication than the duties of justice...” (II.iv.13). By way of illustration, Ames argues that it is possible to “strain too much” in the love of neighbor, but one cannot love God with too much intensity (II.iv.14). Consistent with his distinction between inward and outward obedience, and the primacy of the interiority of moral action, Ames believes that “God is better worshipped with inward affection than outward deed,” although “...men need the outward deed more” (II.iv.17). Ames, reiterating the primacy of the object, again asserts that “the immediate object of religion towards which it is directed is God...” (II.iv.19). More specifically, “religion is related to God through that divine excellency which shines forth in his sufficiency and efficiency” (II.iv.20). This sufficiency and efficiency of God inspire faith, which is the foundation of religion: “Religion comes directly from the faith by which we believe in God as the sufficient and efficient cause of life” (II.iv.21). And, as stated previously, since volition

is the sine qua non of faith, it is the will that apprehends the sufficient and efficient God of the Bible. It is also interesting to note that notions concerning the “efficient cause of life” shifted during the time period studied in this dissertation. As American psychology became increasingly “Arminian,” a concern with the autonomous efficiency of humanity became paramount. Ames, given his definition of religion, may have thought that such a quest was inherently a religious quest, albeit one based on false premises: the worship of the human will as opposed to the One who graciously imparts a measure of his own efficiency to his human subjects.

The “proper act of religion,” therefore, is worship— the honoring, worshiping and adoring God. Ames was quick to add that no good could be added to God, but that the honor of worship “...is an outward good—a testimony to the virtue of another which adds to his glory or esteem. This is all a creature can do for God” (II.iv.23). This “true and worthy esteem of God,” which is the “first matter of religion” (II.iv.24) involves volitional activity as well: “The proper way of honor or religious worship is to subject to another the soul itself, and the inward affections and acts of the will” (II.iv.25). The worship of God requires nothing else than the submission of the will to God.

Natural vs. Instituted Worship

If the proper act of religion is worship, Ames dichotomizes worship or religion into two parts: “The parts of religion are two: natural worship and voluntary or instituted worship” (II.v.1). The topic of natural worship, which has to do with the acts of devotion springing from a knowledge of God’s nature, has a great deal to do with the topic of volition. The topic of “instituted worship” hearkens back to issues discussed in chapter 2. “Instituted worship is the means ordained by the will of God to exercise and increase

natural worship” (II.xiii.1). These means, such as preaching, baptism, and the Lord’s supper, (II.xiii.17), which also have to do with volition (chapter 2), are not disclosed through a simple understanding of God’s nature or of creation (II.xiii.3). Further, as indicated in the definition above, instituted worship serves the natural worship of God, “...otherwise it would not be worship, for one cannot give the honor due to God in any way other than by faith, hope, and love...” (II.xiii.5). Instituted worship serves as “...a means and instrument by which faith, hope, and love function...” (II.xiii.6) and flows from the natural worship of God (II.xiii.8). Since “...no one besides God can know what will be acceptable to him...nothing can honor God unless it comes from him as the author” (II.xiii.13). By submitting to God’s institutions of worship, “...we make God ours and given him due honor in religious worship. We subject ourselves to his authority and ordinances” (II.xiii.14). Listening to God exclusively for direction in worship constrains the worshipper and prohibits religious or ceremonial novelty: “God must be worshiped by us with his own worship, wholly and solely—nothing must be added, taken away, or changed, Deut. 1:32” (II.xiii.19). Worship which is “devised by men” is strictly prohibited. Interestingly, Ames calls such religious creativity “will-worship” (II.xiii.23), or lifting one’s own religious impressions or desires above the requirements laid down by God. This will-worship leads to the sin of superstition (II.xiii.24), which is simply the improper worship of God (II.xiii.25). “In superstition God is always the object and in some way the end, but the worship itself is unlawful” (II.xiii.26).

“Natural worship,” which has to do with God’s nature, also applies to the topic of volition. Excepting the specific institutes of the worship of God, “...all those things which pertain to our duty...” can be understood when the nature of God is, by the grace of

God, correctly perceived and known (II.v.3). This knowledge of God's nature reveals that faith, hope, love, and the hearing of God's word are appropriate and required acts of worship: "Everyone who understands the nature of God rightly knows that God is to be believed and hoped in, that he is to be loved and called upon, and to be heard in all things." (II.v.4). This kind of worship "...is absolutely basic to salvation" in Christ, not as a cause of salvation but as salvation's result (II.v.5). Natural worship engages the will in a particular way, directing the worshipper "...towards God, either as our good or as good in himself" (II.v.9) in faith (when regarding him "...as he is ours at present") or hope (when regarding him "as he is to be ours..."; II.v.10). Natural worship, like all acts of observance, "...is both internal and external" (II.v.7).

Ames's explication of faith, hope, love and the hearing of God's word all touch upon the topic of volition. "Faith is the virtue by which, clinging to the faithfulness of God, we lean upon him, so that we may obtain what he gives to us. John 3:33, *He who receives his testimony has sealed that God is true....*" (II.v.11). Ames outlines five things that "belong together in divine faith," and then explains how each is related to either the will, the understanding, or both:

These five things belong together in divine faith: 1) a knowledge of what God testifies to; 2) a pious affection toward God which gives his testimony greatest force with us; 3) an assent given to the truth testified to, because of this affection toward God who is the witness of it; 4) a resting upon God for the receiving of what is given; and 5) the choosing or apprehension of what is made available to us in the testimony. (II.v.12)

The first element of faith, "...a knowledge of what God testifies to..." is understandably "...in the understanding." Yet, since it is possible that "...unbelievers, heretics, apostates, and the devils themselves" may also have faith, it is clear that knowledge alone is not a sufficient condition for faith (II.v.13). On the other hand, "the second, fourth, and fifth are in the will and produce faith as the force within and act of religion" (II.v.14). The will, understood as a motive "force," is therefore manifested in "pious affection toward God" which is a "great force" within. The will is also the principle faculty involved in "resting upon God," which Ames had previously described as the "life" that differentiates faith from "general assent" (I.iii.16). Finally, the actual "choosing" of the thing promised (for faith cleaves to God's promises, II.v.19) in the testimony of God is ascribed to the will as well. The third "thing" listed above, "an assent to the truth testified to, because of...affection toward God..." is located "...in the understanding but only as it is moved by the will. It does not have the virtue of faith, but is rather an effect of it" (II.v.15). The fifth element of faith is related to Ames's teaching concerning the link between interiority and exteriority of moral action. Just as the internal act of observance tends toward and completes the external act (II.iii.26-28), he argues that the "...perfection of faith lies only in the choosing or apprehension, and so must be defined by it" (II.v.16).

Ames furthers his voluntarist presentation of faith by suggesting that intellectualists actually hold to the most crucial aspect of voluntarist doctrine: the insufficiency of the intellect to produce action. "Those who place faith in the understanding confess that there must be some action of the will to secure the assent, just as in human faith it is said to be a voluntary matter to give credit to someone. So if faith *depends* upon the will, it must be that the first beginning of faith lies in the will" (II.v.20,

italics mine). So, just as Ames previously insisted that the understanding must be involved in the specification of the object (see Ames, 1643; Fiering, 1981), scoring an apparent point for the intellectualists, he turns the tables to argue that the *crucial* issue is not whether the intellect is involved in volition, but whether the intellect is sufficient to move the human being to action. Since, Ames argues, even the intellectualists grant that it is not, the voluntarist case is strengthened.

Ames attempts to further strengthen the case for a voluntarist conception of faith with a consideration of how infidelity, doubt, error, heresy and apostasy (II.v.42-47) tend to diminish or eradicate faith. The necessity of both will and understanding in faith are again affirmed: “These things are opposed to faith not only because they cut off the understanding’s assent, which is necessary to faith, but also because they take away the choice and apprehension of faith which is in the will” (II.v.48).

The primacy of the object is also further affirmed in Ames’s summary statement on the nature of faith: “The nature of faith is excellently set forth in the Scriptures when the faithful are said *To cleave to God*, Josh. 23:6; Acts 11:23; 1 Cor. 6:17. *To choose the way of truth and to cleave to the testimony of God*. Ps. 119:30, 31” (II.v.17). This object primacy is evidenced by Ames’s nuanced discussion of the object of faith. On the most simple level, “God himself is...the first object of faith” (II.v.18), and God’s promises are also trustworthy but derivative objects of faith (II.v.19). The “material object” of faith, or that thing *out of which* faith arises, “...is whatever is revealed and set forth by God to be believed, whether by spirit or word, publicly or privately...” (II.v.21). Contrary to Roman Catholic teaching, “...the church is not absolutely necessary as an object of faith....” (II.v.22), but is rather a “...direct axiom or judgment of truth...” (II.v.23).

Despite his anti-Catholic rhetoric, Ames also is willing, once again, to utilize the “schoolmen” when they agree with orthodoxy. Although the material object is an axiom, it is still true that “...the act of the believer is not directed to an axiom but to the thing, as the most renowned schoolmen say” (II.v.24).

The “formal object” of faith is God’s “truthfulness or faithfulness.” God’s truthfulness therefore differentiates biblical faith from opinion, and provides a sure foundation for the *certainty* of faith.

The formal object of faith is the truthfulness or faithfulness of God...It is a commonplace that faith depends on the authority of the one who gives the testimony. Faith is thus distinguished from opinion, knowledge, experience, sight, or sense. The authority of God plainly lies in his truthfulness or faithfulness. Titus 1:2, *God who cannot lie, has promised.* Hence the proposition is most true that whatever we are bound to believe through divine faith is true. Nothing ought so to be believed unless God himself witnesses the truth of it; God testifies as one who is truthful, and the truth in a witness who knows all things cannot be separated from the truth of his testimony. Therefore, it follows that all that we are bound to believe through divine faith is true. The whole matter is clearly confirmed and used by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 15:14, 15, *If Christ be not raised our preaching is vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ.* If the testimony is not true, the witness is false. Unless it is admitted that whatever God witnesses is true, the surest consequence—namely, that God witness this or that and therefore it is true—would avail nothing. Thus divine faith cannot be a

principle or cause of giving assent to what is false or of making a false assent either directly or indirectly, either by itself or by accident.” (II.v.25)

Although faith is not by sight (and is therefore not “knowledge”), the faithfulness of God therefore assures “...the certainty of faith about the object.... It is true that our faith sometimes wavers, but this comes not from the nature of faith but from our imperfection” (II.v.26). This certainty of faith is assured by the “...sufficient and sure presentation of the objects of faith...” which is found “...in the Scriptures...” (II.v.27). Although the Scriptures present the objects of faith surely, they cannot be mastered by calculation or human effort. An ethical and supernatural adjustment needs to first take place in the subject, “the light and witness of the Holy Spirit stirring up faith in us is necessary in the subject, or our hearts” (II.v.28).

Although the focus on objects has clear continuity with the New Psychology, there are two elements of this doctrine of objects that radically depart from the approach that would develop. First is the primacy of a *particular* object. Second is the undemocratic nature of this discourse. The object is accessible only to those to whom God makes it accessible. And the source of knowledge cannot be mastered by calculation or rationation. God controls understanding. God does the enlightening. The objects of the psychology of the new republic would need to be accessible to *all*, and the duty of enlightening would need to be given to the intellectual elite of the new country.

The ironies here, of course, are multiplied by the disjuncture between this doctrine of illumination, and the other aspects of Puritan theology and society, which maintained that a normative teaching office was *also* prescribed by the Bible, and that the Holy Spirit would work illumination only through the church and its officers. This is another species

of the paradox of Puritan belief, the dual sources of human activity. Just as faith is the believer's and is God's, so to illumination is God's, but is also mediated through the church.

Since faith belongs to the believer, and yet is a gift of God, the paradox is maintained, "Faith is our life as it joins us to God. But it is also an act of life because it is a virtue and our duty towards God" (II.v.19, underline mine).

Hope, which is "...a virtue which leads us to expect things which God has promised us, Rom. 8:25" (II.vi.1), is the foundation for charity, which is "...the virtue whereby we love God as the Chief good..." (II.viii.1). Both hope and love find their foundation in faith: "Charity or love follows faith and hope in natural order as effect follows cause. We love God in charity because by faith and hope we taste in some measure how good he is..." (II.vii.2). With faith as the foundation, both hope and love have their roots in the will. "Therefore, not love but faith is the first foundation of the spiritual building of man. ...it sustains and holds together all the parts of the building" (II.vii.3). Without divinely given faith, human beings are equipped with only "an unclear and remote inclination toward God..." which "...precedes faith..." It is not until the human being is given faith that this "ineffectual 'woulding'" can be transformed into an effectual will, which issues in true love to God (II.vii.4). Once the will is enlivened in divine faith, the human being begins to possess a "love of union," which is "...that affection by which we will to be joined with God" (II.vii.7).

The Will to Commune

"From faith, hope, and love, the virtues of religion referring to God, there arises a double act which bears on the spiritual communion exercised between God and us; the

hearing of the word and prayer” (II.viii.1). Both of these spiritual exercises deal with the will. Just as observance in general is a conformity of the human will to the will of God, the hearing of God’s word, which is, “...the devout receiving of the will of God” (II.viii.4), is a necessary preparation for observance. The hearing is not “the outward sense of hearing,” but is rather “...any perceiving of the will of God, and especially inward receiving and submission” (II.viii.6). The will is involved in the “receiving” of the word of God. “The receiving of the word consists of two parts: attention of mind and intention of will” (II.viii.7). “Attention is applying the understanding to perceive the revealed will of God...often called in the Scripture...seeking of the will of God or a seeking of God himself...” (II.viii.8), and “intention is the application of our will to the devout observance of the will of God now known. Ps. 119:106...” (II.viii.10). The opposite of this devout attention and intention is pride, which, at root, is the condition of a disordered will:

Most definitely opposed to hearing is, first, the pride by which one dwells on his own excellence. Such a person does not wish to submit to the will of God. Pride is always contrary to the humility of religion and to religious observance or obedience in general but it seems most surely opposed to them in this act of religion. A proud man is so far from subjecting himself to the will of another as to a law that he wants to have his own will in place of the law...” (II.viii.22)

Prayer, too, intimately involves the human will: “Prayer is a devout presentation of our will before God so that he may, as it were, be affected by it (II.ix.1). The crucial difference between hearing the word of God and prayer is therefore found in the will. “Prayer differs from the hearing of the word in that hearing is oriented to the will of God

but prayer to our will. In hearing the word we accept God's will but in prayer we offer our will to God to be accepted by him" (II.ix.9). Prayer involves not "simple willing or desire," but is "...a matter of the whole will, i.e., the will itself exhibited and presented to God." Prayer is not simple desire or wishing, "...for then profane men would pray most since they desire most." Instead, true prayer requires "...the desire to obtain something *from God*, the will to seek it from him, and finally the presenting or placing of the desire *before God*" (II.ix.10, italics mine). Just as faith's primary object is God, prayer is differentiated from simple wishing by its expectant engagement with a particular object, *God*. And, just as faith involved the "whole man," intellect and will, but is most centrally an act of will, so too prayer involves both, but prioritizes will: "Prayer is, therefore, formally an act of the will with an *antecedent* act of the mind by which we understand what, of whom, for what, and how we must pray; and a *consequent* act by which we conceive and express in what may be called a mental word the prayer itself" (II.ix.15). Prayer, which aims "...to affect or move God..." (II.ix.18), may be understood as a central way that God communicates the dignity of efficiency to human beings (I.ix.6): "...God is pleased to *commend the force and efficacy of prayer to us* by declaring himself to be affected and, as it were, moved by it. Our prayer is the means by which, and not otherwise, God is willing to communicate many things to us" (II.ix.19, italics mine). Finally, even mental prayer, involves the will: "Mental prayer is that which takes place in the will, mind, and affection without any outside sign purposely used, Neh. 2:4; 1 Sam. 1:13" (II.ix.36).

Ames's discussion of "the circumstances of worship" is also relevant to volition. "The circumstances of worship to be especially observed are the manner [*modus*] which

is described in the third commandment and the time which is commanded in the fourth” (II.xiv.1). Concerning the time of worship, Ames insists that “The most solemn time for worship is now the first day of each week, called the Lord’s Day, Rev. 1:10; 1 Cor. 16:2” (II.xv.1). Ames’s longest chapter deals with the Lord’s Day, but this is not related to the topic of volition except in terms of the religious doctrines taught and obligations that were to be fulfilled on that day, which are inextricably linked to the will.

The manner of worship has much to do with the will. Just as a lack of respect for God’s institutions of worship involves a worship of the will, submission to these institutions involves the will as well. Although embedded in the institutes of Christian worship, the “suitable manner” of worship is still most closely related to “...the nature of religious things...” “That suitable manner is found when the circumstances are established which the nature of religious things requires” (II.xiv.7). The circumstances are dichotomized into “inward or outward” (II.xiv.9), and the inward circumstances are further divided into “...antecedent, concomitant, or consequent” (II.xiv.10). Volition touches upon the first two, which are discussed here. “The antecedent circumstances are a desire and stirring up of the mind or preparation in appropriate meditation on the things which pertain to the holy matter to be handled” (II.xiv.11). Ames explains in more detail: ...before the public and solemn hearing of the word and prayer, private prayer is required, and before private prayer, if it be solemn, there is required some meditation on those things with which our prayers have to do, whether about God to whom we pray or about ourselves who are about to pray or about the things which are to be prayed for (II.xiv.13).

Since God is supremely interested in his people conforming their will to his will, he expects his people to endeavor to prepare their wills for his worship. The concomitant circumstances, also a dichotomy, are “...reverence and devotion” (II.xiv.14). Devotion includes “...a certain special readiness to perform those things which belong to the worship of God...[and] a proper delight in performing them...” (II.xiv.17).

The Will to Do Your Neighbor Good: Justice

After treating “religion,” which focuses on the worship of God (II.v.1), Ames moves to a discussion of “justice,” which is concerned with obligations toward humans. It is significant that he treats justice last in the Marrow. Although justice is *required* in the Puritan understanding (“The truth of religion cannot stand with the neglect of justice and love toward our neighbor...” II.xvi.10), it is treated *last* in the Marrow not so much to emphasize its importance as to put it in proper perspective. Puritan theology, stressing the primacy of the divine Object, argues that the importance of humanity, and the moral obligations of love which flow from that importance are *derived*. “This bond of justice and affection of love ought to flow and derive from our religion toward God...” (II.xvi.8). For Ames, to abstract humanity from its relation to divinity is to lose the grounds for the dignity of what is human.

As Ames moves from the “first table” (the first four of the ten commandments having to do with God) to the “second table” (the last six of the ten commandments having to do with humanity), there is a slight, but perceptible decrease of discourse related to the will. Nevertheless, the will is involved in this section of the Marrow as well. Surely, since justice is a virtue, and virtue involves the will (II.ii.4), the activity of the will is presupposed throughout Ames’s treatment of justice. But, as I will attempt to

show, the 'second table,' being more concerned with outward action, is by definition less concerned with the will.

Whatever movement away from will-centeredness exists in Ames's discussion of justice, he still defined the virtue of justice in volitional terms. "Justice," Ames declared, "...is the virtue by which we are inclined to perform our duty to our neighbor" (II.xvi.1). Ames conceded that this definition is limited, because "general justice..." is "...virtue in general..." and therefore includes religious observance. Justice is also not to be understood as a form of human rights (i.e., a "...thing deserved or received..."). Rather justice "...sets forth the mutual duty between those who are bound by the same law; in this sense it contains all the force of the second table" (II.xvi.2). The object of justice is "...our neighbor" (II.xvi.3), and therefore "...everyone is included..." (II.xvi.5) as a potential object of justice. Since justice seeks the good of the neighbor, "...this virtue is called love toward our neighbor..." (II.xvi.6). As a virtue, love involves the will, since virtue is by definition "...a condition or habit by which the will is inclined to do well" (II.ii.4). It also relates to the will in that the inner affections and desires of the individual are involved: "In this love there is always a desire for union, satisfaction, and good will, just as in love toward God, and there is often added mercy when we consider the misery of our neighbor, though this has no place in love toward God" (II.xvi.7). The derivative nature of this volitional activity is stressed: "This bond of justice and affection of love ought to flow and derive from our religion toward God..." (II.xvi.8). God is always the source of all good. Similarly, Ames argues that there is an "order of love:"

God is first and chiefly to be loved...After God, we are bound to love ourselves with the love of true blessedness, for loving God with love of union, we love

ourselves directly with that greatest love which looks toward our spiritual blessedness. Secondly, as it were, we ought to love others whom we would have to be partakers of the same good with us. For others may be deprived of blessedness without our fault, but we cannot be. Thus we are more bound to desire and seek it for ourselves than for others. (II.xvi.13)

Human happiness (“blessedness”) is therefore inextricably linked to the human duty to love God. First, by experiencing the blessedness of union with God, and then sharing that love with neighbor. “Hence it is that the love of ourselves has the force of a rule or measure for the love of others, *You shall love your neighbor as yourself*” (II.xvi.14). Further evidence of the importance of the will to this discussion is that Ames defined the opposite of the love of neighbor as “an evil will” (II.xvi.79).

Ames’s discussion of “the honor of our neighbor” (based on the fifth commandment) moves the primary concern away from the basic volitional impulses involved in love, toward the more outward activities that constitute justice toward neighbor. Justice affects neighbor either directly or indirectly (II.xvii.1). Ames focused first on the justice that affects neighbor directly, which has to do with “...his status per se or to the degree of his status” (II.xvii.2). Honor, required in the fifth commandment, is justice related to the *degree* of status (II.xvii.3). In this command, “...human society is presupposed and sanctified—private and domestic as well as public and political. Within this society men are to serve each other in the mutual duties of justice and love so that they may exercise and show forth the religion which they profess in the worship of God” (II.xvii.4). “Solitary life,” by way of contrast, is “wholly contrary to the law and will of God” (II.xvii.5).

Honor, which “...is an acknowledgement of the dignity or excellence of another with proper testimony to it” (II.xvii.9), does involve the will, being as it is “...affected with reverence...” when “...excellence and dignity...” is apprehended (II.xvii.11). This reverence is not to be directed to the rich or powerful, but to excellence, and this may be found in individuals of lower status (II.xvii.12). This virtue is also related to God, since it is the duty closest to the “...nature of religion and piety through which we worship God himself...” (II.xvii.13). Just as love is to be given to all, “the duty of honor we owe to all is to preserve their state of dignity unhurt” (II.xvii.16). Ames outlines other virtues which likewise involve volition. Gratitude, for example, is “...a desire to compensate for the benefits received (II.xvii.59), and includes “...a kind of benevolent affection...” Just as inward action tends toward outward action, the affection of gratitude “...should not be exhausted in the emotion itself, but should be manifested in fitting endeavor.” Ames also mentions friendship (II.xvii.65), humility (II.xvii.67), and pride (II.xvii.68).

“Justice directed toward our neighbor’s situation concerns either his person or his outward possessions” (II.xviii.1). In the former category includes *Humanity*, which is understood as “...the virtue by which we are inclined to preserve the life of our neighbor and his tranquility through lawful means” (II.xviii.5). *Chastity*, another virtue directed “toward our neighbor’s situation,” is “justice which relates to the purity of our neighbor...” (II.xix.1), and is “...the virtue of preserving a person’s purity in the things of procreation...” (II.xix.2). The latter category includes *Commutative justice*, which is concerned with “...the outward benefit of our neighbor...” and has to do with “...commutations or exchanges of goods” (II.xx.1). This justice concerns itself with seeing that “...every man is given his own in external benefits” (II.xx.2). “His own” is

defined as “...that over which he has lawful possession” (II.xx.3). Although justice is required in both “acquisition and use” (II.xx.7), Ames’s understanding of just acquisition has by virtue of hindsight a certain ominous tone: “Just occupation is a lawful taking of things which have belonged (i.e., “owned or possessed, II.xx.12) to no one but may become someone’s” (II.xx.11). Ames’s sense of biblical history is that God ordained a first-come, first-served approach:

All things are said to have been common at the beginning of the world and also after the flood, in the sense that no man owed or possessed them in a particular way. They were available in common for anyone who would first take or occupy them. This explains the blessing of God upon mankind: Gen. 1:28... (II.xx.13)

Although this way of thinking had obvious application to the New World, Ames left nothing to the imagination, declaring, “the islands of the sea and the parts of the continent which have never been inhabited are in the same situation” (II.xx.14). Since “ownership, and difference in the amount of possessions, are ordinances of God and approved by him, Prov. 22:2; 2 Thess. 3:12” (II.xx.15), the Puritan could feel justified in settling New England, and claiming ownership to territories that had not yet been “owned or possessed” in a way that the Puritans could understand.

More relevant to the purposes of this dissertation, however, is the fact that issues of ownership and possession occupy a relatively small place in the Marrow. Although the seeds of injustice are undoubtedly sown in this particular chapter, it seems fair to weigh this chapter against the entire work. It is meaningful, I think, that discussion of ownership and possession *follow* the worship of God and the love of neighbor in the Marrow. This appears to have been the case in Puritan society as well, which seemed

more concerned with the hope that native Americans might be "...partakers of the same good with us..." (II.xvi.13) through evangelism, than in acquiring massive amounts of personal property (see Bremer). It appears that concern for personal property and ownership began to usurp concern for worship of God in mental and moral philosophy textbooks in the eighteenth century.

Whereas the former types of justice affect neighbor directly, Ames further outlines two types of justice that affect neighbor indirectly: "...truth telling and contentment. The former affects our neighbor through his belief; the latter through some work or action of ours ordered by one of the previous commandments" (II.xxi.1). "Truth telling is the virtue of heeding the truth in giving testimony..." (II.xxi.2). Ames interestingly notes that "an intention to hurt certainly increases the mischief of a lie but it does not constitute the nature of it..." (II.xxi.22), further supporting the argument that as the focus changes from the first table to the second table, the will becomes less relevant.

Ames closes his discussion of justice with the virtue of contentment, which is "...the acquiescence of the mind in the lot God has given..." (II.xxii.1). This virtue, commanded in the tenth commandment (II.xxii.2), is preeminent:

Of all the virtues contained in the second table, however, none is more internal or intimate to vital righteousness than contentment. By it we are, as it were, led by the hand to contemplate and seek righteousness. And so righteousness in its purity is fitly handed here." (II.xxii.3)

Contentment, which rejoices in the prosperity of neighbor (II.xxii.4), is "...the height and perfection of all love towards our neighbor. Hence contentment is in a way the perfection of godliness of a godly man..." (II.xxii.5). Ames therefore concluded that the tenth

commandment "...stands at the end of an order which proceeds from the less to the more perfect and from the better known to the less known [by nature]" (II.xxii.6). Part of this perfection is that contentment serves as a "foundation" for all the other duties we owe toward our fellow man (II.xxii.8). The opposite of contentment is covetousness (II.xxii.9), which deals with volitional processes such as the "...desire which first instigates and excites the mind to yearn for the good things of our neighbors..." (II.xxii.10). Positively, the commandment requires that we feel joy at our neighbor's success (II.xxii.4). The tenth commandment is therefore highly *interior*, and extremely exacting. A mere desire for our neighbor's goods is a sin.

It is fitting that Ames ended his explication of human moral duty by acknowledging human failure, even the failures of the elect. Although God is pleased to communicate the dignity of his efficiency to those who are united to Christ, Ames also believed that the Christian's enjoyment of that efficiency is tempered by remaining sin. Because of the sin that still remains in the Christian, "...we cannot precisely observe a law... We carry about us flesh that lusts against the Spirit, Gal. 5:17, and we cannot obey without covetousness, inclining and drawing us another way. Finally we are not perfect, Phil. 3:12, and we cannot render perfect obedience. We always need to have that petition in our heart and on our lips, *Forgive us our debts*" (II.xxii.21). Still, always eager to affirm the Puritan paradox that the Christian is unable in himself, but able in Christ, Ames affirmed, "Yet it is rightly and truly said that the *Yoke of Christ is easy, his burden light*, Matt. 11:30, and *His commandments not grievous*, 1 John 5:3." This "ease and lightness of the law of God is not in proportion to our strength: It comes from the grace of

our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, with the gift of the Holy Spirit which is with all those who love the law of God. Amen” (II.xxii.22)

Summary and Conclusion

The second “Book” of the Marrow, the subject of this chapter, deals with “observance,” or conforming the human will to the will of God. This observance is only possible for those united to Christ. An observant will is submissive to God. Observance includes the restoration of the image of God in humanity.

Obedience to God is paradoxical. Through the application of Christ, the believer is given an “inborn principle of life,” which serves as the source of renewed observance. Yet, the believer also recognizes that God is the source of that moral strength: that the efficiency of the Christian life is like all efficiency: derived from Efficiency itself. As Ames summarized: “For since sin came, man cannot of himself do anything acceptable to God...except it be done in Christ through faith and sanctifying grace. John 15:4, 5, *Without me you can do nothing*” (II.i.17). This formulation allowed the Puritan to avoid the dual pitfalls of human pride and human passivity in observance.

Observance flows from virtue, which, far from being a moral indifference is “...a condition or habit [*habitus*] by which the will is inclined to do well” (II.ii.4). Goodness flows from a bent toward the good. This bent is found primarily in the will.

Ames offers a prolonged discussion of “good works,” which, describing the psychology of moral behavior, may be called “moral psychology.” Good works flow from good wills, have good objects, are performed with good intentions, and respect good standards. As is the case in Book One, Ames continues to affirm the primacy of the object in the psychology of will: that the goodness or badness of the acts of will is often

determined by the nature of the object. Further, even saints in this world are incapable of moral perfection. Acts of virtue have inward and outward components. Most essentially, these acts are inward, having to do with volition. Still, the inward acts of virtue have a tendency toward outward expression, and will certainly have that effect if possible. This is a premise that would be supported by all the authors considered in this dissertation.

Observance is expressed through religion or justice. Ames justified this distinction by the structure of the ten commandments: the first four commands having to do with one's love to God, and the second six commandments having to do with one's love to neighbor. Not surprisingly, Ames considered duties to God "primary." For example, it is possible to love human beings excessively, but it is impossible to love God too much. The will has a crucial place in religious observance, since this observance is most essentially interior. Still, the outward expressions of religion are necessary.

The sufficiency and efficiency of God are center stage in true religion. "Religion comes directly from the faith by which we believe in God as the sufficient and efficient cause of life" (II.iv.21). Just as God's character may be summarized by the dual characteristics of sufficiency and efficiency, religion strives to live in the comfort of this reality. By implication, true religion resists all attempts to exalt any efficiency or power over the efficiency of God.

Ames made a distinction between natural and instituted worship. Natural worship flows from a knowledge of God's nature, and may be reduced to faith, hope, love, and the hearing of God's word. Consistent with his statements in Book One, faith has a great deal to do with the will. So too do hope, love and the hearing of God's will involve the will. Ames further affirms his voluntarist position on the will.

Ames closes the book with a consideration of justice, or the duty of humans to one another. Love to God is the foundation of these acts of observance. Ames discusses here the human-centered part of the ten commandments, closing the book with the tenth commandment against covetousness. Ames presses upon the reader the importance of obeying this command, and yet how difficult it is to obey. The command, after all, prohibits envying and the desire to possess some good in a neighbor's possession. He therefore closes the book as you expect he might: with an affirmation of God's power and efficiency, and the dependence of the creature upon the creator.

PART II: DOCTRINE

JONATHAN EDWARDS' FREEDOM OF THE WILL

“‘Tis manifest, that Arminian notions of moral agency, and *the being* of a faculty of will, cannot consist together.”

Jonathan Edwards, *The Freedom of the Will*, (III.7.14)

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

Allen Guelzo (1989) opens his book Edwards on the Will by noting that Edwards' father, Timothy Edwards, had for his 1694 Harvard M.A. defended a thesis explicitly related to the will: "*An Indifferentia sit de Essentia liberi Arbitrii?* 'Whether or not indifference is of the essence of free will?'" (Guelzo, 1989, p. 17). By answering in the negative, Timothy Edwards placed himself well within the prevailing orthodox Calvinistic camp in New England. Somewhat more surprisingly, Timothy Edwards' thesis also addressed a question that his son Jonathan would address 60 years later in a substantial book called The Freedom of the Will. Jonathan too would answer in the negative.

The negative answer to this question could have been predicted from the theology textbook that both Edwardses may have used as undergraduates, William Ames's Marrow of Theology. Ames had argued that free, virtuous action flowed from a habit or inclination toward goodness—certainly not from any "indifference" in the will. But while an answer similar to Ames's may have been sufficient for Timothy's M.A., Jonathan would have to construct an answer for a broader and more "enlightened" audience. The times had changed.

The way Jonathan saw it, one of the most significant differences between the days of his father's youth and the contemporary situation concerned the reality of the Arminian threat. In the 1690s, Arminianism had made significant inroads in England, but New England remained largely unaffected. In the 1720s, however, the Yale College community was shocked when its rector Timothy Cutler converted to Anglican

Arminianism. Tutor Samuel Johnson soon followed. Since Jonathan Edwards was a part of that Yale community, he learned early on that New England could no longer relax on the Arminian question (see Guelzo, 1989; Marsden, 2003).

The Yale incident was the tip of the iceberg. Throughout the 1730s certain ministers or candidates for the ministry with Arminian leanings would occasionally arise in New England. Yet, “The sheer inertia of tradition...would preserve New England...Calvinism largely intact until the Great Awakening of the 1740s” (Guelzo, 1989, p. 26). The excesses of the Great Awakening ironically may have served to weaken an already vulnerable New England Calvinism. Edwards emerged as one of the great defenders of the old way. Guelzo (1989) says it well: by the time of the Great Awakening, Edwards was in no danger of abandoning Calvinism because his “Calvinism was now bound too tightly to him by the cords of philosophy, theology, and, above all, his experience of divine grace.” These experiences firmly convinced him of the Amesean principle that all efficiency is of God. “It followed, then, that those who relieved God of His sovereignty for the sake of making room for mere human goodness were no better than thieves of the divine glory, and of Edwards’ delight” (p. 26). As Edwards said: “Some of the ill consequences of the Arminian doctrines are that it robs God of the greater part of the glory of his grace, and takes away a principle motive to love and praise him” (p. 26-27).

The Enlightened wondered if “Calvinistic determinism really differed from the ethical horrors of Hobbsean determinism...” (Guelzo, 1989, p. 23). As people like Yale rector Timothy Culler and tutor Samuel Johnson abandoned Calvinism they did so often on the pretext that Calvinism could not offer a satisfactory alternative to Hobbes. “In

embracing ‘Arminianism,’ Cutler and Johnson appropriated, not the tenets of the Dutch heresiarch [Arminius], but rather the antimaterialist free-willism of Samuel Clarke. But this distinction did nothing to assuage the rage of Connecticut at the apostates, and the catchword of ‘Arminianism’ stuck to anyone in New England who forsook Calvinism for indeterminism as a better protection against the storm of Hobbsian atheistic determinism” (p. 23-24).

Guelzo also notes that Edwards took a nontraditional approach to the problem of free will in Freedom of the Will. He versed himself in some of the philosophy of the day, particularly Locke in college, and read the leading “Arminian” authors. Edwards was careful to stipulate, however, “I would not be understood, that every divine or author whom I have occasion to mention as maintaining that doctrine, was properly an Arminian” (Edwards, 1754/1986, p. 132). Indeed, one of his targeted authors (Isaac Watts) was an otherwise well-respected Calvinist. Another of his authors (Thomas Chubb) espoused deism (God as a clockmaker who never intervenes in the creation), a doctrine Calvinists considered much worse than Arminianism. Yet Edwards was concerned that the “Arminian” position on the will would eventually and inevitably lead to heresies such as deism (Ramsey, 1986). Guelzo (1989) therefore summarizes, “...little of Freedom of the Will is devoted to historical or even theological Arminianism, but is instead constructed as a secular argument based on demonstrably psychological premises,” (p. 39-40) but noting that “...the ‘secularism’ of Edward’s argument is really only a means of justifying the theological a priori of Calvinism...” This will become apparent particularly in chapter 6 of this dissertation. Further, to reiterate a point made several times before, there is an irony to Edwards’ contribution to the debate. In some

ways he played the role of prophet, demonstrating why an Arminian notion of will was unsustainable. Yet, by presenting his arguments in nonsectarian garb, Edwards' attempt to save the will from the errors of Arminianism may have unwittingly contributed to its loss.

CHAPTER IV

“TERMS AND THINGS” AND THE IRRATIONALITY OF THE OTHER

This chapter is a commentary on the first two parts of Freedom of the Will. In the first part of the work Edwards defined crucial terms such as motive, necessity, inability, liberty, moral agency, and, of course, “the will.” In Part II, Edwards, building upon his definitional work in Part I, confronted several irrational contentions that “Arminians” had made concerning the will. His goal in these pages was to show on purely rational grounds that the Arminian notion of will was an incoherent fiction. In so doing, he scored many points and was, I think, prophetic regarding the loss of will in American psychology. Still, he also contributed to the loss of will in American psychology by playing the Enlightenment game so well. A sectarian dressed in nonsectarian cloths, Edwards obscured the theological substructure that undergirded his notion of the will, setting a precedent for future discussion and debate in American psychology.

A Sectarian’s Nonsectarian Definitions

Edwards began by defining will. On a basic level his definition of will was simple. “The will...is plainly, that by which the mind chooses anything” (I.1.2). By speaking of “that” Edwards could have been interpreted as portraying the will as a kind of thing or entity, a position that he would seek to set aside. “...an act of the will is the same as an act of choosing” (p. 137). Although some theoreticians such as Locke wanted to define will as that which either chooses or *refuses*, Edward thought that when

we refuse we are choosing the absence of the thing refused- so to say the will is that by which the mind chooses is satisfactory.

Contrary to the “Arminian” psychology that was gaining steam during the eighteenth century, Edwards, consistent with his inherited tradition of scholastic psychology, used the term “will” very broadly. All of the following terms Edwards thought were synonymous with will and can be “reduced “ to the notion of choice: “choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, liking, disliking, embracing, rejecting, determining, directing, commanding, forbidding, inclining or being averse, being pleased or displeased with” (I.1.3). Terms such as “liking” and “inclining” show that Edwards, like Ames, thought that acts of will were *internal*.

The unity of the soul is evidenced in that when we prefer, we act. Although Arminian psychologies would typically attempt to break volitional activity into stages (e.g., intellect, then desire, then conscious choice), Edwards’ unitary mind acted as a whole. Once desire became strong enough, choice was made. There was no need for a separate act of a separate entity called “will” to either approve or reject the mind’s own preferences. Referring to his own subjective experience, Edwards claimed that “There is nothing else in the actings of my mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or choosing...that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions; together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate preference, such sensations and motions do actually instantaneously, and constantly arise” (I.1.4). By stressing the parsimony of mental processes, Edwards was loading the deck in favor of Calvinism.

Although Edwards utilized Locke's Essay as inspiration for his theorizing, he certainly did not agree with him on every point. For example, it is telling that Edwards took Locke to task early on in Freedom of the Will, for claiming that will and preference may move in opposite directions. This contention contradicted the unitary mental process that Edwards advocated. Locke's example here is that a person might "prefer" to fly, but could never actually choose to fly. The problem with this example, Edwards claimed, is that the "immediate object of the will" is not noticed. The desire to fly is a "remote" object of preference, but, when we will to walk, that is, when we analyze the actual volition to walk, there is no preference to fly, but only to move limbs, etc. (I.1.4). Locke's analysis at this point confused issues considerably. The object of the "remote" desire to fly is different from the object of the desire to walk. Since the proper level of psychological analysis is a specific act of will (and therefore the "proper object" related to that specific act), the philosopher must focus his attention upon the motives leading to *that* act (and therefore *that* object). The question at hand is: What determined the walking? Certainly not the desire to fly: the object of this desire is different than the object of walking. Further, since the person never actually flies, there is no act of will to analyze, just a "remote preference" or an ineffectual "woulding." Since a would is not a will, this desire to fly simply does not relate to the psychology of volition.

Time and time again, the Arminian objection is that we are often aware of contrary preferences in any given act of the will. Yet, Edwards always brought the psychologist back to a consideration of the "proper object of the will." Edwards dissected another Lockean example: the case in which a person utters persuasive words yet desires that they are not actually effective. The Arminian would claim that this is a

clear case that the will can run counter to preference. Still, Edwards claimed, will and desire do not contradict in this example if we take the proper level of analysis. The person wills to utter persuasive words, and the person also *desires* to utter persuasive words. The person desires that the words spoken *not persuade*. This too is his volition. “In order to prove that the will and desire may run counter, it should be shown that they may be contrary one to the other in the same thing, or with respect to the very same object of will or desire: but here the objects are two...” (pp. 140-141). So, one act of will may disagree or be in tension with another act of will, and the desires associated with these acts of will may also be in tension with each other. But in any given act of will, desire will be consistent with the will (I.1.5).

Edwards concluded this section arguing that although the terms desire and volition may not be synonymous everyone can agree that “...in every act of the will there is an act of choice; that in every volition there is a preference, or a prevailing inclination of the soul, whereby the soul, at that instant, is out of a state of perfect indifference, with respect to the direct object of the volition.” In an act of will, “there is some preponderation of the mind or inclination, one way rather than another...” (I.1.6). Two things are worthy of comment here. First, notice that Edwards conceived of will as a kind of connection between a subject and object. As we shall see, Edwards will speak of necessity in grammatical terms, as a connection between a subject and predicate of a proposition. In anticipation of that section, it might be appropriate at this time to put Edwards definitions here into that context. Remember that a predicate is the part of the sentence or clause that expresses what the subject is or does. The direct object is part of the predicate and is the locus of the action of the verb. So, will can be considered a kind

of connection between a subject (the person willing) and a predicate which includes an object (the thing willed), and a verb. One might even say that the verb *is* the will. That is, the alcoholic drank the drink. The very “drank” is the will. Similarly, when there is no verb, there is no volition: “...where there is absolutely no preferring or choosing, but a perfect continuing equilibrium, there is no volition” (I.1.5).

The second thing to notice here is that Edwards equates will with the inclination of the soul. This means that an act of will requires that “the soul, at that instant, is out of a state of perfect indifference, with respect to the direct object of the volition.” This statement was a direct challenge to Arminian psychology which argued that freedom required that choices be made when the mind was free from such a prevailing inclination. Edwards again *defined* volition in a way to preclude the possibility of Arminian psychology being true.

The Determination of the Will

In the second section of Part 1, Edwards turned to the issue of the “determination of the will.” Just as he accused Arminian psychologists of getting off track regarding the object of will, so too he confronted them for forgetting that the determination of the will is the question with which the psychologist of will is concerned. In this context, Edwards laid the groundwork for his challenge to another main tenet of Arminian psychology: that a free will is a *self-determined* will.

To determine the will, “if the phrase be used with any meaning...,” means to cause the will or choice to be one way rather than another. Will is determined when it is directed to “a particular object.” In other words, the question of the determination of the will must ultimately be able to explain *particular* volitions. Positing a *general* power of

will (such as spontaneity) as the Arminian psychologists were wont to do does not explain why the will would ever move in one direction as opposed to another. So, “...when we speak of the determination of motion, we mean causing the motion of the body to be such a way, or in such a direction, rather than another” (I.2.1). At this point Edwards mentions an argument that is prominent throughout Freedom of the Will. To speak of the determination of the will is to presuppose that a will has a cause. Even the Arminians who speak of the self-determination of the will must mean this since they do, after all use the word “determined.” In brief, the problem with the self-determined will is that “the will is both determiner and determined; it is a cause that acts and produces effects upon itself, and is the object of its own influence and action” (I.2.2).

So, what determines the will, then? It would be tedious, Edwards understandably thought, to enumerate all of the possibilities. On a general level, “...it is that motive, which, as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest, that determines the will” (I.2.3). A “motive” is “...the whole of that which moves, excites or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly.” The motive may consist of “many particular things,” or only one thing. When many things combine to determine the will, the motive is “complex” (I.2.4). Edwards was a bit tautological here. What determines the will? The strongest motive. What is the strongest motive? That which determines the will. Although Edwards did try to clarify this initial tautology by cautiously specifying the nature of motives, he did open himself up to criticism on this point.

Concerning the intellectualist/voluntarist question, Edwards, like Ames, claimed that the understanding is always involved in volition: “Whatever is a motive, in this

sense, must be something that is extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding, or perceiving faculty.” Things that are “perfectly out of the mind’s view” can’t affect the mind (I.2.5).

Edwards argued that the things called motives or excitements or inducements have “some sort and degree of tendency, or advantage to move or excite the will previous to the effect...” Concerning the idea that it is the “strongest” motive which determines the will, Edwards defined strength as the “previous tendency” of the motive to move the will. Some motives have less of a tendency to move the will and are called “weaker motive[s]” some motives have much tendency to move the will, and are “stronger motive[s].” “And in this sense, I suppose the will is always determined by the strongest motive” (I.2.6).

At this point Edwards attempted to be a little more specific about the nature of motives. In brief, the strength of a motive depends upon “...the nature and circumstances of the thing viewed, the nature and circumstances of the mind that views, and the degree and manner of its view...” At this point, Edwards makes the understatement that it “would perhaps be hard to make a perfect enumeration of” the things that determine motive strength (I.2.7). But, he says, one thing is certain, and that is that “whatever is perceived...which has the nature...of a motive...is considered or viewed *as good*...” To say otherwise is to say that the appearance of objects that inclines the will to choice is something other than an appearance of eligibility, which is contradiction: “For to say otherwise, would be to say, that things that appear have a tendency by the appearance they make, to engage the mind to elect them, some other way than by their appearing eligible to it...” (I.2.7).

Two things must be “well and distinctly observed” in this matter, though (I.2.7). First, the word “good” applies to a thing which appear as “agreeable” or “pleasing” or that which “*suits* the mind” (I.2.8). A pleasing object “..must have the greatest tendency to attract and engage it, which, as it stands in the mind’s view, suits it best, and pleases it most; and in that sense, is the greatest apparent good...” To say otherwise is a contradiction. The “good” includes the removal of that which is “disagreeable and uneasy” (I.2.9).

By way of clarification, Edwards noted that volition always has for its object the thing that appears most pleasant. Yet, as he mentioned above, the object is the “direct and immediate object of the act of volition.” An act of volition may be remotely related to other objects, but the direct object is “the thing most immediately willed and chosen” (I.2.10). In the case of the “drunkard,” the object is the act to drink or refrain from drinking. That is, “the proper and immediate object” of the will “are his own acts” (I.2.10). If the “drunkard” drinks it is because drinking was what was most pleasing at that time (I.2.10). “Remote” objects would include the pleasure or pain that will follow the drink, or a consideration of moral judgment. These remote objects are not the proper objects of will, though. The object of volition here is drink or no and when a person drinks that object appeared more pleasing than unpleasing (I.2.11). Notice that Edwards did *not* say that pleasure is always the object willed (which is the way William James characterized the idea that pleasure and pain determine volition). Even something that brings pain (like exercise, for example) may be deemed pleasing by the mind. Edwards was not saying that such an act causes the person to say that the unpleasant feelings are pleasant. It was not the feelings that were selected, but the action.

Edwards attempts to uphold the unity of the mind in his formulations. He used the phrase “the will always *is* as the greatest apparent good” rather than that the will is *determined* by the greatest apparent good, “because an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and the mind’s preferring and choosing, seem hardly to be properly and perfectly distinct.” It may be more properly said that action is determined by “that which appears most agreeable” rather than by preference or choice. An act of volition is “determined by that in or about the mind’s view of the object, which causes it to appear most agreeable.” The factors which determine the mind’s view of an object are numerous and complex. “Particularly to enumerate all things pertaining to the mind’s view of the objects of volition, which have influence in their appearing agreeable to the mind, would be a matter of no small difficulty, and might require a treatise by itself...” He gives a few comments to this effect, trying to explain what might cause the mind’s view (I.2.12), such as “the apparent nature and circumstances of the object” or the thing viewed, the degree of “pleasure or trouble” in the consequences or circumstances of the object, or the clarity of the idea of the object. It is not important here to specify the things which Edwards thought might determine the view of the object, but rather to note that Edwards was thinking of human behavior as determined, and that determinants can be specified (much as contemporary psychology does).

Therefore, the choice of will never departs from that which appears most agreeable and pleasing: “If the immediate objects of the will are a man’s own actions, then those actions which appear most agreeable to him he wills.” Further, “there is scarcely a plainer and more universal dictate of the sense and experience of mankind, than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what suits

them best, or what is most agreeable to them.” By definition, all else is contradiction. To say a person wills what is unpleasing is to say they are pleased with what is unpleasing (I.2.22).

Concerning the intellectualist question, the will can be considered to follow the last dictate of the understanding only if understanding is taken in “a large sense” including the perception and apprehension, not merely reason or judgment. The dictates of reason are, along with all other determining factors, “put into the scales” to determine what is most agreeable. Edwards therefore had room in his psychology for motivational ambivalence. In such cases, we might find that both sides of the scale are heavy with incentive, and the choice is made only by the slightest preponderation of incentive (I.2.23).

Necessity

In Section three, Edwards turned to “the meaning of the terms necessity, impossibility, inability...and...contingence.” Because these terms are used “abundantly” in the free will controversy, clarity was important (I.3.1). Yet definitions were also important because they would determine the course of the subsequent argumentation. Here we find Edwards defining necessity in such a way as to uphold the paradoxical Puritan doctrines of original sin and human responsibility.

To say that a thing is necessary “when it must be, and cannot be otherwise,” is not a good definition, because it leaves the words “must” and “cannot” unexplained (I.3.2). In “common speech” necessity is a relative term- relating to “some supposed opposition” The same with the words “impossible”, “irresistible”, and “unable”. All these terms are relative, implying frustrated desire (I.3.3). To clarify the point, Edwards made a

distinction between “general” necessity and things that are necessary “*to us*.” The first has to do with things that must be “notwithstanding” any opposition at all, “from any quarter;” the latter type of necessity has to do with things that must be, “notwithstanding” whatever opposition *we* may put forth (I.3.5). It is this latter type of necessity that is most relevant to the free will controversy (I.3.6). This idea of personal necessity (which is, again, the “common” notion) supposes that there is some insufficient opposition of our wills: “though we desire or endeavor [i.e., will] to the contrary,” the necessary thing occurs (I.3.7). As we shall see, Edwards was trying to rule out this idea of necessity, for the necessity he had in mind did not include the idea of opposition. In sum, the idea of necessity he was trying to oppose is that we are ‘unable’ to do something when all of our desires are insufficient to overcome opposition (I.3.8).

Edwards was concerned that this “common” way of thinking about necessity was a “fixed and settled” cognitive “habit” that would not be easy to overcome. Instead, he desired to use the term as a “terms of art” and so admonished his readers to be careful (“exceeding circumspect and wary”) that they don’t “insensibly slide into the vulgar use...” of the term (I.3.9). So, when these words (such as “necessity,” “impossible,” “irresistible,” “unable”) are used in a manner that implies no opposition, they are used “in some new sense,” in a manner “quite beside their use in common speech” (I.3.10). It is precisely in this “new” way that many “...metaphysicians and philosophers...” use these terms in a way that implies no opposition (I.3.11). Definitionally, then, “metaphysical or philosophical necessity is nothing different from certainty.” This certainty is the “certainty that is in things themselves.” This certainty in the things themselves is the foundation of our sure knowledge of them (I.3.12).

Edwards thought it best to adhere to the philosophical view of necessity because of certain problems associated with the typical definition of necessity: The typical definition of philosophical necessity is “that by which a thing cannot but be.” Still, Edwards thought two things wrong with it. First, terms like necessity, can, cannot, unable, are in this case left undefined and, second, the terms cannot and unable seem to improperly imply opposition (I.3.13). Edwards therefore expanded his initial definition of necessity: “Philosophical necessity is nothing else than the full and fixed connection between the things signified by the subject and predicate of a proposition, which affirms something to be true.” When such a full and fixed connection *exists*, we can then say that “the thing affirmed in the proposition” is philosophically necessary. No opposition is implied in this definition. Edwards therefore concluded, “...in this sense I use the word “necessity,” in the following discourse, when I endeavor to prove that necessity is not inconsistent with liberty” (I.3.14).

The connection between the subject and predicate of a proposition that “affirms the existence of something,” may be “full and fixed” in several ways. The connection between the subject and the predicate of the proposition may be “*in and of themselves*.” This is the case in “many things” which are “necessary in their own nature,” such as the “external existence of being generally considered,” and “God’s infinity” and the fact that two plus two equals four. In sum, “innumerable metaphysical and mathematical truths are necessary in themselves” therefore, the subject and predicate which affirms them are perfectly connected. (I.3.16). Another way that the connection between subject and predicate of a proposition “which affirms the existence of something” may be necessary is because the thing affirmed has already come to pass. The existence of whatever has

come to pass is now necessary (I.3.18). For example, the statement ‘Jonathan Edwards was born in 1703’ is necessary in this sense. Finally, the existence of the thing affirmed may be necessary “consequentially.” This necessity of consequence applies to propositions that are perfectly connected with propositions that are necessary in one of the two ways mentioned above (in and of themselves, or by having already come to pass; I.3.18). So, all necessary things that are future (which are not necessary in themselves and are not necessary by having already taken place) must be necessary by a necessity of consequence. They obviously can’t be necessary in themselves or they would already exist, and they can’t be necessary by already coming to pass, because this contradicts the supposition. So anything that has a beginning, including things past, must come into being this way. Therefore, because volitions all come into existence (are not necessary in themselves) they arise by a necessity of consequence (I.3.19).

Edwards also noted that things may be necessary generally or particularly. General necessity is when a certain relationship between subject and predicate is certain “in the most general and universal view of things” (I.3.20), and a particular necessity has to do with “a particular person, thing or time...” Many things that a particular person has no hand in, i.e., that their will did not create, are necessary in this way. This contention, as we shall see, has an important use in Edwards’ system (I.3.21), and is related to the Calvinistic doctrines of original sin and the sanctification of the believer.

Edwards closed his discussion of necessity with an application of his definitions to other terms such as “impossible.” The term impossible in this light is simply “negative necessity” or a “necessity that a thing should not be.” This too is a “term of art” different from the vulgar usage (I.3.23). “Unable” and “inability” have similar meaning. Contrary

to the vulgar use, philosophers and divines use these terms in a way that does not imply insufficient will or endeavor, but rather deny that there is any such will at all (I.3.24). Edwards also highlighted the difference in the way the word “contingent” was defined in its vulgar use and its use by metaphysicians. In vulgar use, something is “contingent” when we can’t discern its cause. It isn’t to say that there is no cause, but just that the cause is not known (I.3.25). In the polemical writers, however, something is “contingent” when it comes to pass with no cause at all, i.e., it has “absolutely no previous ground or reason” (I.3.26). Edwards would challenge the idea that *anything* could possibly come to pass for no reason whatsoever.

Moral and Natural Necessity

In Section 4, Edwards expanded upon his definitional work on the topic of necessity by developing the crucial distinction between two types of necessity, natural and moral, a distinction that would help to explain the Calvinistic paradox that humanity is in bondage to sin, and yet still accountable to God. Although Edwards appeared to be open to the possibility that the distinction between moral and natural necessity was not “...a proper and perfect distinction...” (I.4.2), he believed that the distinction had “very important” theological consequences (I.4.7), and therefore utilized the distinction heavily throughout the Freedom of the Will. Although he adapted the terms to his use, he also indicated that he did not make them up. Instead he justified his use from the fact that these terms were the ones “usually” used (I.4.7).

After giving a varieties of uses of the phrase “moral necessity” he says that moral necessity is the “necessity and connection and consequence which arises from such *moral causes*, as the strength of inclination, or motives, and the connection which there is in

many cases between these, and such certain volitions and actions.” Moral inability would therefore consist in a want of inclination or desire to do a particular thing (I.4.3). By implication, the human race, which lacks the inclination to obey God through the fall of Adam, has a moral inability to obey God. Further, we see that Edwards *defines* will as a moral entity. Although Upham and James would reject Edwards’ application of the moral/natural distinction, they would continue to affirm that the will is a moral faculty.

Natural necessity, on the other hand, is a necessity arising from natural causes. A will is by definition not a natural cause. We are said to be naturally unable when we can’t do a particular thing even if we will because nature won’t allow it (I.4.4). In this sense, natural inability is most similar to the vulgar use of the term necessity as described above. The theological use of this term will become clear as we investigate the nature of these natural causes.

Although the types of motive differ in these two types of necessity, the nature of necessity is the same in both. For one, “moral necessity may be as absolute as natural necessity” (I.4.6). To make this point, Edwards appealed to the experiences of his readers—“...I suppose none will deny...” that there are occasions when motives are very strong and difficult to resist. Although people may have power “...to surmount difficulties...” still, “...that power is not infinite...” For example, a man may be able to resist “ten degrees of difficulty,” yet not be able to withstand “a thousand degrees” (I.4.6).

To clarify the distinction between natural and moral necessity, Edwards affirmed that the distinction isn’t in the “nature of the connection” but rather “in the two terms connected” (I.4.7). Moral necessity deals with moral *causes* which are of a “moral

nature” such as “habitual disposition” or “motive exhibited to the understanding,” and moral *effects*, such as those “...consisting in some inclination or volition of the soul.”

Regarding natural necessity, Edwards noted that much of what we call nature we don’t control. Our wills have nothing to do with the way the “material world” operates. Men are accustomed to making a distinction between ““nature” and “choice”; as though they were completely and universally distinct.” Although none will deny that choice is often dependent upon nature, we also, Edwards was convinced, easily see the difference. The difference is what is “suggested by what appears to the senses without reflection and research” (I.4.8). Here, and throughout Freedom of the Will, Edwards utilized an introspective and intuitionist epistemology very similar to the type that would come to dominate American mental philosophy in Thomas Upham and others.

As if to make himself perfectly clear, Edwards repeats the point made earlier: “necessity” in the phrase “moral necessity” does not imply insufficient voluntary opposition. To the contrary moral necessity is “...a certainty of the inclination and will itself” (I.4.9).

These considerations of natural and moral necessity help to clarify the crucial concepts of “...natural and moral inability” (I.4.10).

What has been said of natural and moral necessity, may serve to explain what is intended by natural and moral *inability*. We are said to be *naturally* unable to do a thing, when we can’t do it if we will, because what is most commonly called nature don’t allow of it, or because of some impending defect or obstacle that is extrinsic to the will; either in the faculty of understanding, constitution of body, or external objects. *Moral* inability consists not in any of these things; but either in

the want of inclination; or the strength of a contrary inclination; or the want of sufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the will, or the strength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both these may be resolved into one; and it may be said in one word, that moral inability consists in the opposition or want of inclination. (I.4.10)

The fact that Edwards included the faculty of understanding among natural causes says much about his voluntarism.

A morally unable person may still possess the natural capability to do a morally good thing: i.e., he has the hardware—he has the intellect to tell him right and wrong, and the muscles to carry out the kind act. Yet, natural ability, although a necessary condition of moral activity, is still insufficient to produce moral activity. If the person possessing the requisite natural equipment lacks the inclination or desire to carry it out, the deed will remain undone. So in the case of moral inability, “...the thing wanting is not a being *able* [in a natural sense], but a being *willing* [in a moral sense]. There are faculties of mind, and capacity of nature, and everything else, sufficient, but a disposition: nothing is wanting but a will.” To illustrate the point, Edwards spoke of “a woman of great honor and chastity may have a moral inability to prostitute herself to her slave.” Likewise, “A child of great love and duty to his parents, may be unable to be willing to kill his father.” Further still, “a strong habit of virtue and great degree of holiness may cause a moral inability to love wickedness in general...” (I.4.11).

Edwards returned here to the “...distinction of moral inability, viz. of that which is general and habitual, and that which is particular and occasional” (I.4.12). “General and habitual” moral inability is an “inability in the heart to all exercises or acts of will of

that nature or kind [good or evil], through a fixed and habitual inclination, or an habitual and stated defect, or want of a certain kind of inclination.” For example, “a very ill-natured man” can’t be kind.” On the other hand, “particular and occasional” moral inability or the inability of will in a particular act, is “...an inability of the will or heart to a particular act, through [1] the strength or defect of present motives, or of [2] inducements presented to the view of the understanding, on this occasion. If it be so, that the will is always determined by the strongest motive, then it must always have an inability, in this latter sense, to act otherwise than it does; it not being possible, in any case, that the will should, at present, go against the motive which has now, all things considered, the greatest strength and advantage to excite and induce it.” Edwards therefore ruled out libertarian or indeterminist notions of mental action (such as those that would characterized Upham and James). “...Will and endeavor against, or diverse from present acts of the will, are in no case supposable, whether those acts be occasional or habitual; for that would be to suppose the will, at present, to be otherwise than, at present, it is” (II.4.12). These distinctions also helped to clarify Calvinistic thought. All people in Adam possessed a *general inability* to do the good, possessed as they were of an inability to “all exercises” of obedience to God’s law. Yet, even those united to Christ were liable to individual acts of disobedience, and, although not possessed of the general inability characterizing those “in Adam,” are still to be considered morally unable in those particular sins through insufficient motives.

The word “inability” is therefore used by Edwards in a way divergent from its “original import” in the phrase “moral inability” (I.4.13). As noted above, when used in its “proper” and common sense “inability” signifies natural inability. That is, in the case

where a person has a will/inclination, yet is still unable. It isn't proper to say "it can't be done" if a person *could* do it if he willed. A drunkard *could* (would be able to) keep the cup from his mouth if he were so inclined: "...a man can't be truly said to be unable to do a thing, when he can do it if he will." In other words, a person can't be said to be without natural ability when he is only lacking in moral ability. He can but he can't. If the will were there, he *could* engage in the activity. "There are faculties of mind, and capacity of nature, and everything else, sufficient, but a disposition: nothing is wanting but a will." Since natural ability is present, personal responsibility is held intact.

Liberty and Moral Agency

The fifth and final section of the first part of Freedom of the Will deals with the issues of freedom and agency. Edwards, building upon his definitions in previous sections, argued that "the plain and obvious meaning of the words "freedom" and "liberty" in common speech, is power, opportunity, or advantage, that anyone has, to do as he pleases." This definition includes freedom "...from hindrance or impediment in... doing...as he wills." The opposite of this liberty is "...being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise" (I.5.1). Freedom is therefore lost only in cases of natural inability.

Only those beings that have a "faculty, power or property" called "will" can have (or not have) liberty (I.5.2). Still, Edwards advised caution in this regard because of the classic error of the hypostatization or reification of faculties. Properly understood, a faculty is simply an ability belonging to someone or some thing. The error which Edwards (following Locke) challenged is turning the faculty into a being or a thing. When this error is committed it is easy to treat the reified faculty as if it were an agent

within the agent, possessed of faculties itself. But since freedom or liberty can only be predicated of agents, and the will is not an agent, it is improper to ascribe liberty to the will itself. Freedom of the will is in this sense a misnomer. The term freedom can only be meaningful when it signifies the freedom of the agent to do as he or she pleases (I.5.2).

Two things are contrary to liberty: “constraint” and “restraint” (I.5.3). Constraint is force or compulsion- being forced to do something contrary to his will. Restraint is not being able to do according to his will. Edwards explicitly endorses Locke’s treatment of this topic. As long as the will is free from constraint or restraint, the will is free. Liberty has nothing to do with how the will is caused: “let the person come by his volition or choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is fully and perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom” (I.5.4). According to this definition, even the actions of those in Adam, whose inclinations are necessarily against God, are free and therefore culpable.

Edwards then turned to the Arminian/Pelagian definition of freedom. He thought that there were three things which “belong to their notion of liberty.” First, it is said to consist “...in a self-determining power in the will, or a certain sovereignty that the will has over itself...” Second, a free will is *indifferent*, i.e., “...the mind, previous to the act of volition, be, *in equilibrio*.” Finally, a free will is a contingent will, not in the previously defined vulgar sense of the term (i.e., not knowing the cause of an event), but in the manner in the philosophical sense, “...as opposed to all necessity, or any fixed and certain connection with some previous ground or reason of its existence” (I.5.5). In

Section II, Edwards would attempt to dismantle all three of these ideas: self-determination, indifference, and contingency.

Finally, Edwards defined a moral agent as "...a being that is capable of those actions that have a moral quality, and which can be properly denominated good or evil in a moral sense..." Moral agency includes a "moral faculty" which is a "...sense of moral good and evil," and "... a capacity which an agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements or motives..." (I.5.6). The sun does excellent things but isn't a moral agent. Fire does bad things, but isn't a moral agent. "Brute creatures" likewise lack moral faculty, are not sensitive to moral inducements or motives, and lack the ability to reason. They too cannot be considered moral agents (I.5.7).

To further illustrate his meaning, Edwards described the difference between a human ruler and a subject. These folks have a "circumstantial" difference in that they differ in the moral inducements by which they are capable of being persuaded. Rulers can't be persuaded by the sanctions and threats, rewards/punishments of moral law, but both can be influenced by "a knowledge of moral good and evil." The "...moral agency of the supreme Being," however, differs from the moral agency of created moral beings in that God cannot be moved by threatenings, but is rather is moved by a pure and perfect vision of moral good. True to his Puritan heritage, Edwards sought to posit the supremacy of God in everything, seeing in God not only "the essential qualities of a moral agent" but also the very "...source of all moral ability and agency." Any moral ability or agency found in human beings must be credited to the Source. And, since humanity is made in God's image, humanity shares in the moral agency of God (I.5.8). Here Edwards reiterates the crucial Amesian point that God is the only source of

efficiency in the universe, and is therefore to be given credit for all goodness found in the world. As we proceed, it will become clearer that Edwards too was intensely interested in preserving God's glory as the Source of all goodness, and in advocating for the creaturely humility that this glory implied.

Arminian Irrationality

In the second part of Freedom of the Will, entitled "Wherein It Is Considered Whether There Is or Can Be Any Such Sort of Freedom of Will, as That Wherein Arminians Place the Essence of the Liberty of All Moral Agents; and Whether Any Such Thing Ever Was or Can Be Conceived of," Edwards applied his various "terms and things" to the Arminian psychology. As the title suggests, his goal was to show how Arminian psychology was based upon something inconceivable and irrational. Less obvious, Edwards was concerned with refuting several *varieties* of the Arminian error. This approach puts the subsequent developments in American psychology into an interesting light as American mental philosophy tended to recapitulate one variety of the Arminian position, while the New Psychology tended to favor another.

Self-Determination

In the first section, Edwards took aim at the first of the three components of Arminian notion of freedom of the will: the idea that the will must possess a "self-determining power" in order to be free. Recalling his warning against the reification problem, or of ascribing agency to faculties, he assumes that the Arminians are aware of this problem and will not commit it (II.1.2).

If the will is self-determined, then any given act of will must be caused by the will itself. But, "...if the will determines all its own free acts, the soul determines all the free

acts of the will in the exercise of a power of willing or choosing; or, which is the same thing, it determines them of choice; it determines its own acts by choosing its own acts” (II.1.4). If this is the case, every free act is determined by a preceding act of the will. By definition, if this preceding act of choice is free, it must also be determined by a preceding act of choice. Yet this line of reasoning makes it impossible for there to be a “first act” in the chain of causality. If a free act of will must be self-determined, it must be caused by a preceding act of will. Yet this presumes that the preceding act of will is also free, and therefore also preceded by an act of will. One can take the chain of cause an effect back as many steps as one may like. Eventually there must be a first free act of will. But, by the Arminian definition this free act will also be self-determined, i.e., caused by a preceding act of will. The Arminian is therefore left with the very awkward situation of a first free act of will *preceded* by another free act: a contradiction. The Arminian might at this point say that the first act of will is caused by something other than the will. But this too contradicts the Arminian definition of freedom: that a free act of will is a self-determined act of will. Given the Arminian definition, free will is shown to be a non-entity. “...This Arminian notion of liberty of the will, consisting of the will’s self determination, is repugnant to itself, and shuts itself wholly out of the world” (II.1.5). A will shut “wholly out of the world” is a non-entity, a myth. Arminian psychology, then, though attempting to extol the powers of the human will, ended up destroying the will instead.

Edwards then turned his attention to possible lines of defense that an Arminian might levy against this argument. For example, Edwards constructed a possible evasion that:

When the Arminians speak of the will's determining its own acts, they don't mean that the will determines its acts by any preceding act, or that one act of the will determines another; but only that the faculty or power of will, or the soul in the use of that power, determines its own volitions; and that it does it without any act going before the act determined... (II.2.1)

This evasion is "full of the most gross absurdity." If the power of the will determines an act of will, it must do so by a prior act of will. In what other way can the will affect anything but by choice? Edwards continues in this vein, refuting several such "objections," which do not need to be included in this analysis. Time and again he shows that each possible Arminian objection ultimately ends up in the problem of infinite regress described above. Each objection, that is, except one. The exempt objection that an Arminian might posit is that an act of will simply "...comes to pass *of itself*, without any cause; and that there is absolutely no ground or reason of the soul's being determined to exert such a volition..." (II.2.11). If this is what Arminians mean when they insist on the will's self-determining power, they speak "words without meaning" and reduce the entire debate, which has to do with what *determines* the will, to meaninglessness and absurdity. Since Arminians also held to the idea of contingency as a requirement of liberty, Edwards was convinced that Arminian psychology actually committed this error. Although Arminians "... hold the free acts of the will to be *contingent* events...", (II.2.12) it must be maintained that things that are *caused* are not contingent. If something determines the will, it isn't a contingent event. So, even the Arminian contention that free acts of will are self-determined contradicted the idea of contingency, which states that acts of will are not determined.

Causality and Contingency

In light of the Arminian belief that free acts are contingent (i.e., uncaused) acts, Edwards thought it necessary to answer the question in the next section: “whether any event whatsoever, and volition in particular, can come to pass without a cause...”

Ironically, this variety of “Arminianism” was arguably not prevalent in American psychology until the advent of “scientific” psychology of William James. Still, given its late ascendancy, Edwards’ comments here are of interest.

Edwards began his section defending the principle of universal causality with an attempt to define the issue. Typically the term “causality” refers to “positive efficiency” to bring something to pass, i.e., “positive productive influence.” But the word cause can be used more broadly to apply to anything that serves as a “ground or reason” for a particular existence. The sun is the efficient cause of the thawing of water, but is also a cause of their freezing, although not an efficient cause. The “withdrawment” of the sun is the ground and reason of freezing, it is connected to the freezing, i.e., the freezing depends upon the “withdrawment.” This is in Edwards mind as much of a cause as an efficient cause (II.3.1).

Repeating a point made above, causes may be moral as well as natural. Both types of cause are equally “real” (II.3.2). In arguing for the efficacy of moral causes, Edwards was insisting that motives and other psychological events had causal efficacy. James would make the same point throughout the Principles. His chapter on the automaton theory is particularly relevant here. Yet, as it became more difficult to articulate a coherent notion of moral agency, it became increasingly difficult to explain precisely how volition was a moral phenomenon.

Edwards defined cause as:

any antecedent, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole, or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that event, is true; whether it has any positive influence [like the absence of the sun or of sound], or not. And in agreeableness to this, I sometimes use the word “effect” for the consequence of another thing, which is perhaps rather an occasion than a cause, most properly speaking.” (II.3.3)

Although many of Edwards interpreters’ have made much of his “occasionalism,” which is the doctrine that the only efficient causality belongs to God, this particular use of the term occasion seems simply to refer back to the idea that something can be a “ground or reason” of an existence without being an efficient cause, such as his description of the sun’s “withdrawment.” Unlike these other commentators, I will not interpret Edwards’ Freedom of the Will in light of his “Miscellanies,” which makes it more difficult to interpret him as an occasionalist. I do not deny that this was his viewpoint, I simply desire to interpret Freedom of the Will the way his eighteenth and nineteenth century interpreters would have interpreted it. Why did Edwards take such definitional pains? Perhaps with tongue in cheek, Edwards explained that it was to remove an “occasion” to object to what he says later in the book. Even here, an “occasion” may be interpreted as a non-efficient cause, i.e., something having an influence through its absence (II.3.4).

Edwards thought it common sense that nothing comes to pass without a cause, except that which is self-existent such as God. All things that “begin to be” (like volitions) must have a cause. This idea, that a new existence must have a cause “...seems to be the first dictate of the common and natural sense which God hath implanted in the minds of all mankind, and the main foundation for all our reasoning about the existence of things, past, present, or to come.” Edwards’ recourse to common sense is significant here, showing that he was indeed trying to utilize a nonsectarian and enlightened method to sectarian ends. His use of the pronoun “our” is significant in this regard. For Ames, “our” beliefs were most frequently the beliefs of the sectarian community. Edwards, utilizing the approach of enlightenment, desires to speak to a universal community of like-minded and reasonable individuals (II.3.5). Whenever we see a “new mode of existence “...the mind of mankind necessarily supposes that there is some cause or reason...” for the change (II.3.6).

If the principle of cause and effect is taken away, “all knowledge of any existence” is eradicated, including the existence of God (II.3.7). Given the limitations of the human mind, we argue for the existence of God in a way that relies heavily upon notions of cause and effect: “we first ascend, and prove a posteriori, or from effects, that there must be an eternal cause; and then secondly, prove by argumentation, not intuition, that this being must be necessarily existent; and then thirdly, from the proved necessity of his existence, we may descend, and prove many of his perfections a priori” (II.3.8). Edwards’ use of reason to prove God’s existence is surprising given his rather voluntarist approach to salvation. Edwards, like Ames, thought that the understanding could never fully embrace the truth of the gospel unless God changed the will. Yet here in Freedom

of the Will Edwards adopts a different strategy: attempting to reason people into the truth using “universal” argumentations.

In a less theological strain, Edwards also thought that the rejection of the notion of cause and effect undermines our ability to know anything at all. If there is no cause and effect, we can know nothing “...but our own immediately present ideas and consciousness.” Why is this? Typically, we infer that the sensations that are “excited in us” are caused by things outside of us (II.3.10). Without the notion of causality this inference is ungrounded. Further, without the notion of causality, the behavior of people is entirely inexplicable. So, if the will is not determined or caused, then “millions and millions” of volitions come about “without any cause or reason why they do so...” (II.3.11). Yet, since contingency is blind, the fact that we see order and predictability in the world mitigates against the idea that there is no causality. Predictability and order can’t follow contingency: “...something besides mere contingency has a hand in the matter” (II.3.12).

Closing this section, and pointing toward the next, Edwards gave a specific example of how some Arminians attempted to argue for contingency in the acts of the will—by positing that the will operates from different principles than matter. Still, Edwards pointed out that even if Arminians were to argue that acts of the will are not subject to cause and effect because they are “...existences of an exceeding different nature from other things...” such an argument “...would be an evidence of their strangely forgetting themselves...” They would be giving a reason (i.e. a cause) to explain why there is no cause of the will (II.3.14). So it is “repugnant to reason” to argue that an act

of the will may come to pass without a cause. All things that are not self-existent must have a cause (II.3.15).

The “Active” Nature of the Will

The next section of Freedom of the Will deals with this particular “error” exclusively, by focusing upon “THE AUTHOR of the *Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creatures*.” Edwards had in mind here the Calvinist theologian, philosopher and hymn-writer Isaac Watts. Edwards had pointed out in his introduction that a person may be a Calvinist in nearly every respect, but still fall into the Arminian error concerning the will. Edwards thought Watts had so stumbled. Given the strong reputation of Watts it is perhaps not surprising that Edwards never actually explicitly named Watts (II.4.1).

Watts thought that the notion of self-determination was not applicable “in corporeal things,” yet did hold for spirits [like the soul] because spirits “...are beings of an active nature, who have the spring of action within themselves, and can determine themselves” (II.4.1). The problem with this solution, Edwards thought, is that by giving a reason that there is no reason for the will’s actions he contradicts himself. The active being *is the cause*, so cause and effect *must apply* even to spirits according to Watt’s own suppositions— i.e., the cause is found, according to Watts, in the *nature* of the spirit (II.4.2). A further problem is that active nature is a “*general* thing, it is an ability or tendency of nature to action...” Yet this ability in itself can’t explain why the person chooses one particular thing over another. Active nature is undifferentiated- the whole debate, Edwards reminded his Arminian opponents, is about elucidating that which causes the will to move in one direction or another, not just to elucidate why the will

moves in general (II.4.3). The notion of active being is also liable to the infinite regress refutation of self-determination. Since active being can only bring about effects by acting, we are left with the difficulty of explaining the first act of active being. The Arminian is left with difficulties any way he turns: if this first act is caused by a previous act of the active being, or if this act is caused by something other than active being.

After expanding and refining these arguments, Edwards concluded, “therefore the activity of the nature of the soul affords no relief from the difficulties which the notion of a self-determining power in the will is attended with, nor will it help, in the least, its absurdities” (II.4.8). Given these contradictions, Edwards concluded that Arminian psychologists are forced into great inconsistency.

Indifference

In the next section, Edwards turned to the idea that the will needs to act from a state of perfect indifference in order to be free. Tellingly, Edwards was perplexed with the way that Arminian psychologists reported a “universal” experience that was foreign to Edwards’ Calvinistic consciousness: “A GREAT ARGUMENT for self-determining power, is the supposed experience we universally have of an ability to determine our wills, in cases wherein no prevailing motive is presented...” Edwards rejects the idea that this experience is universal. Still, Edwards’ Calvinistic subjectivity would become increasingly rare in the American context, and the Arminian argument would be used widely, with Upham and James as leading (modified) examples (II.6.1).

Edwards took Isaac Watts to task for this viewpoint. Watts asserted that there are “many instances” when the will isn’t *determined* by “...present uneasiness, nor by the greatest apparent good, nor by the last dictate of the understanding, nor by anything else.”

The will in this case “discovers its own perfect power of choice, rising from within itself, and free from all influence or restraint of any kind.” The will may in many cases move without motive or preference (II.6.2).

Instead of interpreting this Arminian subjectivity, Edwards challenged Watts on logical grounds. The idea that the will can move without motive is a contradiction. It is to say that the will chooses while remaining indifferent, that it is inclined while not inclined, has preference while having no preference, etc. Always concerned to focus his analysis on the moment of choice, Watts, Edwards thought, must want to say that the will is indifferent *when* it chooses. If he were simply saying that the will is indifferent until it has choice/preference, he would not have been saying anything controversial. The controversy and the illogic of the idea is that choice is made while will is indifferent. When different objects appear “equally fit,” Watts argues, the will by its own determination “creates its own pleasure,” so that the pleasure arises from its choice, which wasn’t based on antecedent pleasure. Edwards interpreted Watts to mean that the will is indifferent when it chooses, and preference follows the choice, which is made in indifference (II.6.3).

Edwards also criticized Watts’ notion that the pleasure follows the choice. For Edwards, by definition, the pleasure *is* the choice, not its consequence. A choice “in the same instance”, in the same occasion or case, can’t come before itself. Edwards frequently simply argues from the assumption that his definitions are true, and does not pause to consider whether his definitions may have shortcomings based upon the psychological experiences of Arminians: “The very act of choosing one thing rather than another, is preferring that thing.” Given Edwards’ definitions, it simply does not make

sense to say that the will chooses without preference (II.6.4). Again, “to suppose the will to act at all in a state of perfect indifference...is to assert that the mind chooses without choosing. To say that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleases, is to say that it can follow its pleasure, when it has no pleasure to follow” (II.6.6).

To be fair to Edwards, he did offer an explanation for what the Arminian psychologists took to be an example of a choice made in indifference: to touch a square on a chessboard. Edwards postulated that three steps are involved in the purportedly “indifferent” action of the will, each of which show that the mind is always subject to inducements (II.6.8). First, a person has a “general determination that it will touch one of the squares,” perhaps for “making some experiment.” Second, since no one square actually appears better than any other, the agent makes “...another general determination to give itself up to accident...” Finally, the person makes “a particular determination to touch a certain individual spot’ that the mind suggests through accident.” Yet throughout the process the mind is never actually indifferent to the act of will in question (II.6.8). One of the reasons that Arminians get confused at this point is that they misunderstand the nature of the object. The object of volition in the chessboard example was not a place on the chessboard, but was rather the action of touching a place on the chessboard (II.6.12). Yet, since the mind has no preference for any particular square on the chessboard, the Arminian mistakenly concludes that the person makes the choice indifferently.

The Problem with Indifference

In the next section Edwards challenged the idea that freedom of the will consists in indifference. Here Edwards reveals that his target was more than simply Arminians,

since “Pelagians, semi-Pelagians, Jesuits, Socinians, Arminians, and others...” held to this view (II.7.2). Although there were minor differences in approach, Edwards thought that all groups held that indifference “...leaves the will not determined already; but...vacant of predetermination, so far, that there may be room for the exercise of the *self-determining power* of the will; and that the will’s freedom consists in, or depends upon this vacancy and opportunity that is left for the will itself to be the determiner of the act that is to be the free act” (II.7.4).

Edwards insisted that, for this scheme to work, the indifference must be “*perfect* and *absolute*”; there must be perfect freedom from all antecedent preponderation [sic] or inclination.” This is because an *antecedent* inclination removes perfect indifference from the self-determining power of the will; the soul is already inclined in one direction...when inclination is present, it “binds the will, so that it is utterly impossible that the will should act otherwise than agreeably to it” (II.7.5). Here again Edwards seems to fall back on his definitions. For while the “strength of the will” was something separate from “inclination” in Arminian minds, these two were inextricably linked in Edwards’ mind. So, given Edwards’ definitions, in order for the will to be “its own master” the indifference in the will needs to be perfect (II.7.10)

With these things in mind, Edwards then asked if “...this notion of the liberty of will consisting in indifference and equilibrium, and the will’s self-determination in such a state, be not absurd and inconsistent” (II.7.11). To this end, Edwards laid down “...an axiom of undoubted truth; that every free act is done *in* a state of freedom, and not only *after* such a state.” If an act merely follows a state of freedom, that act isn’t free: “...liberty must yet continue, and coexist with the act; the soul remaining in possession of

liberty.” This is simply the Arminian’s assertion...actions are free when the soul is indifferent (II.7.12). So, Edwards asked, is this possible in the Arminian way of thinking? Can a soul put forth a volition while remaining indifferent? “The very putting of the question is sufficient to show the absurdity of the affirmative answer.” This would amount to saying that (given Edwards definitions, of course) the soul has preference while it has no preference. “Choice and preference can no more be in a state of indifference, than motion can be in a state of rest...” The implication of this Arminian doctrine, therefore, is that volition and freedom are mutually exclusive concepts. Like darkness and light (II.7.13).

Some may object to this reasoning, saying that it misrepresents the Arminian position because all that the Arminian asserts is that will is free to determine its own volition (i.e., preferences), not that it is devoid of preferences. The free will is the cause of the transformation from indifference to inclination (II.7.14). To this Edwards wondered how a will in a perfect state of indifference might put itself out of this indifference. It must do it by will or choice. If it isn’t by choice, how else is the will going to determine it? If it isn’t the will, then the will isn’t self-determined and therefore not free. So, if we grant that the indifferent soul puts itself out of indifference by choice, we have the same absurdity, an indifferent soul choosing, or a soul with no inclination inclining (II.7.15).

Another evasion is to say that liberty “consists in a power to suspend the act of the will,” this suspension allowing the mind to consider/deliberate both sides before willing (II.7.17). Edwards applied a familiar analysis to show that this notion also is absurd. For example, if liberty of will consists in suspending another act of will, the liberty of that

suspending must consist in suspending that suspension. Not only is suspending a suspension an absurd idea, but one is also left with the problem of infinite regress, as is so often the case in Arminian psychology.

The Role of the Understanding

Edwards argued that “nothing is more evident” than that when men act voluntarily they do as they please. This in turn requires that the thing to be done “appears” agreeable, which means that an act of the understanding is involved in volition (II.9.1). Many Arminian writers conceded the fact that the acts of the will have a connection to the understanding. He lists Dr. Whitby, Dr. Samuel Clarke, and Dr. Turnbull as examples (II.9.2). Given this admission, Edwards sought to “impartially” consider if these Arminians were consistent with themselves (II.9.3). Dr. Whitby “plainly supposes” that will follows the understanding’s view of the greatest good, or, as Edwards quotes him in a long quote, “*what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen*” (II.9.4). Along these lines Whitby argued “that there is no need of any physical operation of the Spirit of God on the will, to change and determine that to a good choice, but that God’s operation and assistance is only moral, suggesting ideas to the understanding...” The fact that Whitby posited an infallible connection between understanding and will was itself a kind of necessity, pointing outside of the will to explain the determination of the will’s actions (II.9.6). One way of avoiding this is to say that the contents of the understanding are determined by the will, through the will’s determination to attend to certain things and ignore others (II.9.7), but this is a “weak and inconsiderate” reply. What determines the preceding act of the will to attend to some things and not others? According to Whitby’s own assertions, the light in the

understanding is that “which alone doth move the will.” So, even this preceding act of the will was determined by the understanding. Any act of will that precedes the preceding act of will must be similarly determined. And if every act of will is determined by the light of the understanding, none of them are free according to the Arminian belief that a free will is self-determined. So, with “one stroke” Whitby destroys his own argument (II.9.8).

Edwards also criticized Samuel Clarke’s variety of Arminianism. Clarke collapsed will and understanding into one faculty, but, Edwards argued, this maneuver doesn’t help, because “If the dictate of the understanding be the very same with the determination of the will or choice...then this determination is no *fruit* or *effect* of choice: and if so, no liberty of choice has any hand in it...” (II.9.9). If the determinations of the will and the dictates of the understanding are the same thing, then freedom is the freedom to choose whatsoever dictates of the understanding one wills. But this makes choice precede understanding, which is contrary to the supposition that understanding precedes choice (II.9.10). Furthermore, if the last dictate of the understanding is the determination of the will itself, if that last dictate is to be free in the Arminian sense, it must be self-determined, i.e., determined by choice, so the soul must freely choose what that dictate will be. So this is a choice preceding the last dictate of the understanding, a contradiction. If the will and understanding be the same, then this preceding choice is also a dictate of the understanding. Yet if this understanding be not necessary, it must be the product of the self-determining will, *in infinitum* (II.9.11). Edwards continued that if the will and the understanding are the same, we have confounded them. Supposing that Arminians believe this, then for the understanding to be free, it must be self-determined,

and not rely on thing prior, etc. This is not a desirable kind of freedom. Do we really want to be free from the evidences that are presented to our understandings? Arminians argue that the use of reason is a main vehicle for moving men toward morality. Yet, if freedom consists in freedom from such causes, then freedom increases to the extent that reason's ability to persuade is diminished (II.9.12).

Whether will and understanding are really one, the Arminian understanding of freedom from necessity requires that will *not* be connected with understanding, "and the further from such connection, the greater the freedom. And when the liberty is full and complete, the determinations of the will have no connection at all with the dictates of the understanding." This makes moral appeals vain because these appeals are to the understanding (II.9.13).

Motives

Edwards then turned his attention to the role of motives in the determination of will, a topic of particular importance in nineteenth-century American psychology. If the will is subject to cause, then it must be "excited by some motive." To imagine that no motive is necessary is the same as to say that the will has no end, no *telos*, when it acts. This was contrary to Edwards' definition: "...for the mind to will something, and for it to go after something by an act of preference and inclination, are the same thing" (II.10.1). Motives are the cause of acts of will, i.e., they bring about the existence of these acts. "Motives do nothing as motives...but by their influence..." Acts of will are the effects of their cause, motives (II.10.2). If volitions are the effects of motives, they are necessarily connected to motive. If will is caused by motive, it isn't caused by itself, i.e., it isn't a self-determining power (II.10.3).

After laying the definitional groundwork, Edwards took aim at the system of Mr. Chubb's, which was, like all of the systems Edwards examined, "greatly divided against itself" (II.10.4). Chubb, like Edwards, was "abundant in asserting" that will is subject to motive, and that motive is the "previous ground and reason of all its acts." Directly quoting Chubb, "Volition cannot take place without some previous reason or motive to induce it." Chubb uses terms reason and motive interchangeably it seems: a motive is a reason that the will moves (II.10.5).

So far so good. Yet, to Edwards' great confusion, Chubb also asserted that motives are the consequence of free volitions, for before the mind is subject to any motive, it chooses to be so. In other words, the will chooses to comply with the motives presented to it. To be free, a soul must be able to act or refrain from acting from its motives. Will therefore acts as the final arbiter, choosing among motives regardless of their strength (II.10.6).

Edwards thought that these things were manifestly inconsistent. "How can the mind first act, and by its act of volition and choice determine what motives shall be the ground and reason of its volition and choice? For this supposes the choice is already made, before the motive had an effect." The absurdity of this is analogous to the idea of a son who is before the father yet who is begotten of the father (II.10.7). If the preceding accusation is correct, that the choice is before and after the motive, how is it true that every act is *preceded* by a motive, as Chubb asserts? So the same motive is both before and after the act of the will, and thus is illogical (II.10.8).

Chubb called motives the "passive ground or reason" for action, a "remarkable phrase" in Edwards' estimation (II.10.10). Ramsey argues that Chubb's use of this

phrase is not as ambiguous as Edwards' claims. Edwards' language is highly charged and a case can be made that he is too quick to show that Chubb is illogical before actually fairly representing his psychology. Ramsey argues that Chubb's idea of passive ground is simply that motives stimulate the will to activity, and then become passive- the will then makes its choice. Ramsey thus argues that an essential difference between Edwards and Chubb is that Chubb argues for a sharp distinction between understanding and will.

Edwards was taken aback by the fact that Chubb asserted that volition requires motive, yet volition does not follow the strongest motive. With physical causes, the strongest prevails, but not with moral causes. The reason why this is the case, Chubb explained, is that motives are not strictly speaking real causes at all, but are "passive reasons" for action. Ramsey's explanation helps here. Motives can only suggest. Loudly or softly, they can only suggest. The ultimate choice is made by the autonomous will (II.10.12). There is a strong similarity between Chubb and Upham at this point. Upham, too, argued that the will acted as an arbiter among the various motives which are presented to it. He did this by arguing for a strong distinction between intellect, sensibility, and will. He further divided sensibility into two distinct types of motives which suggest to the will which way to go. The ultimate determination is up to the will.

Edwards did not take time to reflect upon the possibility that Chubb may have been operating upon the assumption that psychological faculties are like autonomous agents which have powers of action within themselves. If he had, he would have "anticipated" a very common tactic of nineteenth-century American faculty psychology. Instead, Edwards simply argued that "these things can't stand together." Since Chubb admitted that motives "invite," this must mean that they are inviting in accordance with

their strength (II.10.13). But if the will follows a motive that is not strongest, it is acting with no cause at all, with no motive at all, which contradicts, Edwards thought, Chubb's assertion that will always follows motive. The idea that mind can prefer a weaker motive is, Edwards thought, absurd, and is inconsistent with Chubb's assertion that there is something in the motive that moves the will. "Can there be previous ground in a thing for an event that takes place, and yet no previous tendency in it to that event?" (II.10.14).

Although Edwards may not have been as careful as he might, he still does seem to have scored a point against Chubb's approach, which seems to undermine the meaning of motive strength. Still Edwards proceeded throughout this section to argue simply along the lines of his own assumptions and definitions. If we assume that will is determined by strongest motive, Edwards continued, the idea that weaker motive might determine will is a contradiction. It is to say, "...the event follows an antecedent or a previous thing, as the ground of its existence, not only that has no *tendency* to it, but a *contrary tendency*."

Edwards' main criticism is that Chubb says that the motive is the ground and reason of the will, and then, by denying the importance of motive strength, in effect says that motive is *not* the ground and reason of the will (II.10.15,16). It is as if God designed a scale so that the side with less weight would move down. This would prove that the weight isn't the thing that moves the scale. And, given that strength of motive is irrelevant, the balance should be able to move with no weight at all (II.10.17). In other words, if motive strength is irrelevant, Edwards wondered what other way they *could* be relevant.

Foreknowledge and Necessity

In a section that illustrates very well the fuzzy boundaries between enlightenment and sectarianism, Edwards argued that God's foreknowledge of volitions proves that volition is not contingent, or without necessity (II.11.1). Edwards focused on God's foreknowledge because Arminian theology argued that God's "choice" of those who will be saved is based not upon an eternal predestination, but rather upon a foreknowledge of faith. God "chooses" those whom he knows will of their own free wills believe in Christ. Edwards hoped to show that the foreknowledge of God was really no ally to the Arminian cause.

There were two parts to Edwards' argument. First, to show that God has a certain foreknowledge of men's volitions, and second, to demonstrate the consequences of this fact (II.11.2). Edwards was amazed that he even needed to establish this first point, yet found that the doctrine was "denied by some that pretend to believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God." Crucial to the thesis of this dissertation, Edwards did not assume that everyone would agree with the analysis that was to follow, but directed his argumentation to "...such as own the truth of the Bible." This phrase indicates that Edwards thought he was proceeding on purely rational grounds up to this point. He thought he could assume *all* his readers would "own" reason, but not all Scripture (II.11.4).

Edwards' first argument was based upon the fact of God's prediction of the choices of human beings in the Bible (II.11.5). Edwards first laid down some rational principles which Edwards thought all could embrace (II.11.9). First, if God doesn't know volitions in advance, he can't foretell them (II.11.6). Second, if God doesn't foreknow the volitions of men, neither can he foreknow the consequences of these volitions

(II.11.7). The consequences of men's choices are enormous, "branch[ing] forth into an infinite number of series." No matter how important and vast these consequences are, God, if he cannot know the volitions of human beings, does not know their consequences either (II.11.8). This was a conclusion altogether unacceptable to a Puritan such as Edwards.

Edwards then turned to the Scripture to show that, first, Men's moral volitions have been foretold by God. The moral (good or bad) conduct of Pharaoh, Josiah, Israelites, Ahab, Hazael, Cyrus, kings of Syria and Egypt, "Antiochus Epiphanes," Peter, and Judas are all foretold in the Bible. Edwards gives Scripture references for most of these events (Peter doesn't get one, for example, because Edwards assumed that his readers knew the reference; II.11.10).

Secondly, events that depended upon the moral conduct of particular persons are also foretold by God in the Bible. For example, God's promise to Abraham required that Joseph be sold into slavery and resist temptation (II.11.12). Third, God also foretold the moral conduct of entire nations and large masses of people: the Egyptians, Amorites, the destruction of Babylon, and the return from "Babylonish captivity" (II.11.12-19). Fourth, unless God foreknows, the promises concerning things future are unsound as well (II.11.20). The "great apostasy" predicted involved the moral actions of men and could not have been foretold if God doesn't foreknow volitions (II.11.21). Fifth, without foreknowledge, the promises concerning the kingdom of Christ are also on very shaky grounds (II.11.22), as are the foundational promises made to the patriarchs.

Sixth, if God doesn't have foreknowledge of men's actions, prophecies in general are without substance because "almost all of them, if not universally without exception"

have to do with the moral actions of moral agents, or with events dependent upon the actions of moral agents (II.11.27). After listing other examples, Edwards concluded that God needs to foresee the actions of men's wills, or all his predictions are "without knowledge" (II.11.30). If God can't foresee the actions of men's wills, he could not foreknow anything related to the actions and works of mankind. All he could know was the workings of nature not dependent upon man, and those events "as he would bring to pass himself by the extraordinary interposition of his immediate power" (II.11.31). Yet, God couldn't really foresee those events that he plans on bringing to pass by extraordinary interposition, because he would need to know "the state of the moral world" to interpose...which he isn't allowed to know. He wouldn't foreknow when the right time to judge the world would be, or anything else (II.11.32). Further, God really couldn't foresee what would come to pass in the natural world, because the moral world is the end of the natural world, and God's plans concerning what he does in the natural world depend upon what he plans to do with the moral (II.11.33). The consequences of all this were unfathomable to a Bible-believing person. For example, when Jesus said that heaven and earth will pass away, but his words would not pass away, he was engaged in conjecture (II.11.36).

For a second argument, if God doesn't foreknow volitions, he didn't foreknow the fall and couldn't foreknow the things that are consequent to this event. He couldn't foreknow Christ's coming into the world, or the events leading up to this event. The Scripture couldn't say that God chose Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4), nor do all of the other references to this foreknowledge stand (II.11.38).

Third, if God doesn't foreknow volitions, he can't rightly be portrayed as the God who rules over all with tranquility and joy, nor can it rightly say that God doesn't repent. The consequence is that we must interpret Gen 6:6 quite literally: God is subject to continual disappointments, and repents over his creation continually (II.11.4).

Fourth, if God can't foresee, and is subject to such disappointments, his management of the world must be under "great and miserable disadvantages." God will continually have to shift his plans, "mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and disordered movements, in the best manner the case will allow." He must be subject to confusion. Not able to foresee, he will regret the consequences of his choices, like humans (II.11.41). This simply doesn't accord with reason or Scripture. God is, according to Scripture, perfectly prescient, his plans stand, immutable (II.11.42).

Fifth, the consequence of this scheme is that God, after he made the world, was frustrated in his plans, and when the world had turned toward sin in Noah's days, we literally interpret scripture that God repented, because he had no idea things would turn out so bad. Further, God has no idea if such things will continue, as man is left to his own free will (II.11.43). According to the scheme Edwards was trying to refute, the fall could not have been foreseen and must have greatly disappointed God. So the Messiah and everything else must be the fruits of the disappointment that his good world got messed up by the free will of angels and men. Further, even after the cross and resurrection, God remains uncertain if these interventions will be effective. During the apostasy of Christendom (i.e., the middle ages), God couldn't be sure the church would ever recover (II.11.44). So, although Scripture clearly claims that God made the world

for himself and foreordained that he would accomplish his purposes, this is impossible if one assumes that God does not have a foreknowledge of volitions (II.11.45).

Having shown from Scripture that God has foreknowledge of volitions (a point that Arminians agreed with), Edwards then attempted to prove that this foreknowledge implies necessity (a point that Arminians strongly denied), by a necessity of consequence. Edwards' first assertion used to prove that foreknowledge implies necessity was that an indissoluble connection with something already existing makes a thing necessary (II.12.4). Edwards had in a previous section of Freedom of the Will argued that for things which are past, "their past existence is now necessary." It is impossible now that these past things should be otherwise than certain (II.12.5). Divine foreknowledge is necessary in this sense; it came into existence a long time ago (II.12.6). Things connected with this necessary existence are also necessary by a necessity of consequence. Just as a proposition that is connected to a proposition that is necessarily true, is also necessarily true (II.12.7). Similarly, if there is divine foreknowledge, then the events connected to this foreknowledge are also true. These volitions are necessary, i.e., they must come to pass (II.12.8).

Edwards' second assertion was that no future event that is contingent (without necessity) can be certainly foreknown. To be certain of anything requires evidence, or something that makes the existence evident (II.12.10). But if future events are contingent, the future existence of that event is without evidence...there is nothing that would make the existence evident. There are two kinds of evidence: self-evidence, or things necessary in themselves. Or, secondly, connection to something that is self-evident. Contingent future events have neither. Because there is no evidence for the

existence of these contingent events, they can't be known. Therefore, God can't foreknow them (II.12.11).

Third, if future volitions are not necessary, God can't foreknow them. To say he could foreknow them would be inconsistent, i.e., to say that he certainly knows something that is uncertain. If God knows all things, he would know that such a thing is uncertain. To say that God would know an uncertain event with certainty would be to say that God is in error. To say that God may have ways of knowing contingent events is ridiculous, the same as saying that God may know contradictions to be true (II.12.13).

The corollary to these rationations was, not surprisingly, directly relevant to the theological differences between Calvinists and Arminians. Calvinists, like Ames, had always argued that God had decreed every event that would come to pass, including the faith of the elect. Arminians thought that God knew of the faith through foreseeing the future. The Arminians gained nothing by making this distinction. The connection between the decree and its terminus is no more certain than the connection between God's foreknowledge and its terminus. Adding a degree to foreknowledge doesn't make it more certain (II.12.14). Things infallibly foreknown are as certain as any decree written down (II.12.15). Given the Arminian assumption that foreknowledge does not impede the liberty of the individual, since foreknowledge of volitions implies necessity, necessity can't impede the liberty of the individual. It also follows that, if the decrees (as opposed to the foreknowledge) of God are somehow contrary to liberty it can't be in their necessity (II.12.16).

At this point Edwards took aim at the specific claims of certain Arminians, in the process highlighting the fact that foreknowledge may not *cause* the future event, but it

certainly makes it necessary (II.12.18). The problem with Arminian reasoning is that it supposed that the only way a relation can be proven necessary is if it is causal. God's foreknowledge makes the volitions necessary, even if it doesn't cause them (II.12.19).

Further, if one grants that God's foreknowledge is the effect of future existences (a point that Edwards did not agree with), this doesn't make the existence of the event any less certain/necessary. This is as if the event has already happened, and already had its influence, causing its effect, God's foreknowledge. This makes the existence of the action absolutely certain. Because the effect (foreknowledge) exists, so too the cause (the existence) must be certain (II.12.23). No matter what tactic one takes, as long as the Arminian holds to the idea that God possesses a certain and perfect knowledge of the volitions of men, these volitions are necessary (II.12.27-28).

Edwards concluded this chain of reasoning asserting that "...there is no geometrical theorem or proposition whatsoever, more capable of strict demonstration, than that God's certain prescience of the volitions of moral agents is inconsistent with...contingence." Therefore, the Arminian idea of liberty falls (II.12.32). Further, the Calvinist notion of decree "does not at all infer any more fatality in things" than the notion of foreknowledge, that Arminians embrace. So all the rhetoric about having the tendency of Hobbes or the Stoics applies as much to them as it does to the Calvinists (II.12.33). Likewise, Arminian objections to the Calvinist doctrines of total inability and efficacious grace (that they are incorrect because they imply necessity) fall on the same grounds (II.12.34).

Edwards concluded the second part of Freedom of the Will by arguing that even the Arminian notion of a self-determined will posits a kind of necessity. If all the free

acts of will are determined by antecedent acts of will, the acts are determined and therefore necessary. And the preceding acts, if they are to be free must also be determined by antecedent acts, and are also therefore necessary. So all free acts of the will are necessary and *can't be free* unless they are necessary. Yet, Arminians contend that necessity is inconsistent with liberty (II.13.1).

If the Arminian counters by saying that the free acts of the will are not determined, i.e., have no cause, it doesn't help. This is the same as saying that acts of will come about for no reason whatsoever. "But that which is without a cause, is dependent on no free act of the soul: because, by the supposition, it is dependent on nothing..." (II.13.2). The Arminian idea of liberty therefore both embraces and rejects contingency. Edwards certainly had no quibble with the Arminian when he inadvertently embraced necessity, even though this was a contradiction with his own definition of freedom. But to embrace contingency would be to undermine the very dignity of the human that the Arminian purported to protect:

Now let it be considered what this brings the noble principle of human liberty to, particularly when it is possessed and enjoyed in its perfection, viz. a full and perfect freedom and liableness to act altogether at random, without the least connection with, or restraint or government by, any dictate of reason, or understanding; as being inconsistent with the full and perfect sovereignty of the will over its own determinations. The notion mankind has conceived of liberty, is some dignity or privilege, something worth claiming. But what dignity or privilege is there, in being given up to such a wild contingency as this, to be perfectly and constantly liable to act unintelligently and unreasonably, and as

much without the guidance of understanding, as if we had none, or were as destitute of perception as that smoke that is driven by the wind! (II.13.4)

Summary and Conclusion

Edwards began his Freedom of the Will defining the “various terms and things” that he would use to dismantle Arminianism. As Guelzo (1989) has noted, however, he defined terms in such a way as to automatically exclude Arminian psychology. So, while it would be difficult to attack Edwards’ abilities as a reasoner, it would be possible to attack him on definitional grounds. I called attention to this as a matter of further illustrating the problems associated with a “nonsectarian” approach to moral discourse. Since Edwards based his chief arguments on reason, he could simply play the Arminians as inconsistent and irrational. Yet, since he did not subject his definitions to scrutiny, these claims were suspect. As we shall see in Thomas Upham, he too tended to simply *define* his psychological system according to his theological predilections while simultaneously claiming the mantle of objectivity and science.

Edwards, like Ames, used the term “will” very broadly to include the whole gamut of psychological phenomena that have to do with the basic inclinations of the human soul. Contrary to Locke (and Arminians as well), Edwards argued that will and desire are inseparable phenomena: the tendency to separate them was based upon a confusion of objects. Although it is possible to have desires for contradictory objects, a given act of will concerns only *one* object. Therefore, the desires one might have toward another “remote” object are not relevant to a given act of will.

Similarly, Edwards argued, Arminians offered confused explanations of the determination of the will. The duty of the mental philosopher is to explain *particular* acts

of will, i.e., why the will moves in one direction rather than another. By offering a *general* principle like “spontaneity” (as some Arminians had done), this question is not answered. A better answer, Edwards thought, is that particular acts of will are determined by the “strongest motive.” Objects which appear “in the mind’s view” most pleasing are the objects that are chosen. Motives did not “influence” the will like one billiard ball hitting another. Rather, will simply was what the mind does when possessed of inclination and the ability to carry out the inclination. The things which determine the “mind’s view” are multitudinous, and Edwards did not feel obligated to provide an exhaustive list. The fact that Edwards believed that the causes of volition could be specified, however, indicates that he was entirely comfortable with a “scientific” approach to psychology, although this obviously was not his purpose. Still, this stands in contrast to the “Arminian impulse,” which made a scientific psychology of will difficult at first, and, in the end, impossible.

Edwards then dealt with the term “necessity.” Edwards was concerned that the popular notion of necessity stood in the way of a proper understanding of the freedom of the will. Popularly, an event is necessary when it takes place despite fierce opposition. We try and try, but the event takes place anyway. A proper understanding of the freedom of the will, however, would require a philosophical definition of necessity, i.e., *certainty*. Regarding acts of the will, all that necessity means, therefore, is that under certain conditions volitions will certainly occur. For example, when a person desires to engage in an activity and nothing stands in the way of such an engagement, the act will necessarily follow. No opposition to the will is involved. As we have seen, this

definition helped Edwards to argue that the sins of those fallen “in Adam” could be necessary and still remain subject to judgment.

For Edwards, there were two types of necessity, natural and moral. Natural necessity was a certainty having to do with “natural causes.” For example, water will boil at a certain temperature. Natural causes include essentially everything outside of the will, including the acts of the understanding. Moral causes are those things pertaining to volition such as motives, affections, inclinations, etc. Moral necessity simply means that volition certainly takes place in view of the strongest motive. Moral inability, then, is a lack of inclination to perform a certain activity. Once again, Edwards’ nonsectarian reasoning supported his sectarian beliefs. This helped to support the Calvinist belief that apart from Christ, people are morally unable to trust God. Yet, since people possess the natural ability to do this, culpability remained intact.

Edwards also carefully defined “freedom.” Naturally necessary events are *not* free. For example, a person may desire to stand up but may be tied down and thus naturally unable to perform the task. Morally necessary events, on the other hand, *are* free. When a person acts according to desire, i.e., when they do what they want to do, they act as a free person. This definition also served Calvinistic theology. The sinful volitions of humanity are morally, but not naturally, necessary. Therefore, these actions are free and therefore culpable.

Finally, Edwards turned to the issue of moral agency. A moral agent is one who can engage in actions which are “properly denominated good or evil in a moral sense.” Further, moral agents possess a moral sense and are capable of understanding moral inducements. In this context Edwards affirmed Ames’s basic contention that God, not the

human will, is the source of all moral good in the world. Edwards reveals himself therefore to be engaged in the same theological project as William Ames, the desire to uphold the glory of God in the salvation of sinners. Methodologically, his approach is, however, considerably different.

The Second part of Freedom of the Will applied this definitional groundwork to the varieties of Arminian psychology with the purpose of showing the irrationality of the same. The first Arminian postulate that Edwards challenged is that the freedom of the will consists in its self-determination. His basic refutation was simple, and was repeated in various forms throughout the book. A self-determined will is, by definition, a choice determined by the will. Since the only activity the will engages in is choice, it follows that the self-determined will must determine its own actions through a preceding act of choice. But that leaves the Arminian with a problem concerning this preceding choice: was *this* choice free (self-determined), or was it determined by something outside of the will? If the choice is determined by something outside of the will (i.e., if the choice is not free), then the Arminian cannot argue that the final choice (i.e., the choice depending upon the non-free choice) is free. If the preceding choice is to be free, it too needs (on Arminian premises) to be determined by *another* act of will, which leaves yet another choice to be examined. Is this choice free? If so, what about the choice preceding that choice? Etc. The regress continues until we reach the first act of the will. If this first act is determined by something outside of the will, then the whole chain is not free. If this first act is free, then it is by definition a self-determined act, i.e., preceded by another act of will, which is impossible (a first act cannot be preceded by another act). Self-determination therefore crumbles. The Arminian notion of the self-determined will,

Edwards concluded, “is repugnant to itself, and shuts itself wholly out of the world” (II.1.5). This conclusion is highly germane to the question being addressed in this dissertation: why did American psychology lose the topic of the will? If Edwards was right, the Arminian notion of free will was simply a myth, something that does not and cannot exist. If *American* psychology were to embrace the self-determined will (which it did in the psychology of Thomas Upham and others), therefore, Edwards’ argument implies that the will of American psychology existed in name only. That is, in some sense, American psychology lost its will well before the 1930s.

In view of the fact that some Arminians also contended that free acts of will are also contingent (i.e., uncaused) events, Edwards attempted to show the destructive implications of denying the universal existence of cause and effect. In addition to undermining common sense, the denial of universal causation undermines the foundations for knowledge of the outside world and of God himself. Edwards also took exception to the idea that the “active nature” of the will can explain particular choices. The notion of an active nature is a general cause that cannot explain *particular* events.

Some Arminians argued that choices can be made in a state of “indifference,” that is, without prevailing motives in one direction or the other. Although Edwards thought it possible for the will to be indifferent *before* a choice, he found the notion that a choice could be made in a state of indifference was a blatant contradiction (given Edwardsean definitions, of course). Edwards defined the will as the preponderating inclination: to say the will acts without inclination was to say that it inclines without inclination. Further, if one postulates that freedom consists in indifference (as some Arminians did), this indifference would need to be “perfect.” *Any* inclination would put the soul out of

equilibrium and would therefore rob that act of freedom. The stronger the inclination, the less freedom. Given that acts of volition are by definition inclinations of the soul, there can be no such thing as a freedom of indifference in the acts of the will.

Edwards also took certain Arminian writers to task for their position on the relation between will and intellect. For example, some had argued in intellectualist terms, saying that the will can be determined through the persuasion of the intellect. Yet, Edwards pointed out, this was a deterministic postulate, and contradicted Arminian definitions of freedom. In another section, particularly relevant to nineteenth century American psychology, Edwards challenged the contentions of some Arminian psychologists concerning the role of motives. These psychologists thought that motives are necessary to move the will, but that the strength of motive was not the ultimate determinant of action. Edwards argued that this approach was also incoherent: if motives do not determine volition by their strength, what other kind of influence can they have?

Arminians had taken refuge from the purportedly pernicious implications of Calvinism by arguing that God does not decree and predestine some to everlasting life, but rather *foreknows* who will come to faith of their own free will. Edwards spent considerable time showing, first, that the Bible does teach that God foreknows the volitions of people (as the Arminians insisted), and second (in a manner inconsistent with the Arminians), that this foreknowledge implies necessity just as much as the strongest Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. He closed the second section of Freedom of the Will arguing that even the Arminian's beloved notion of self-determination implies a kind of necessity. Since the Arminian's only option is to embrace the irrationality of

contingence at this point, Edwards hoped to show that the Arminian really had *no place* to go. Except, of course, to Calvinism.

CHAPTER V

“THAT HORRID BLASPHEMOUS CONSEQUENCE”

In Part I and Part II of Freedom of the Will (chapter 4 of this dissertation), Edwards attempted to show that the Arminian notion of will and moral agency was incoherent. In Part III, he tried to show that Arminianism was actually destructive, undermining even the very things that Arminians held most dear such as moral agency, the character of God, the usefulness of moral law, and common sense. Continuing to use his nonsectarian approach, Edwards further cornered his Arminian adversary by turning the tables on them. It is not, after all, Calvinism that undermines morality. It is, ironically, Arminianism that undermines.

Having dealt with the question: “whether any such thing [as the Arminian notion of freedom of the will] does, ever did, or ever can exist, or be conceived of,” Edwards turned to a different question: “whether any such kind of liberty be requisite to moral agency, virtue and vice, praise and blame, reward and punishment” (III.1.1). Given the fact that Upham and James both assumed that this type of liberty was essential to moral responsibility, this is a question relevant to the history of American psychology. Not only did Edwards think that the Arminian notion of liberty was illogical, but this section of Freedom indicates that Edwards would have thought that such a notion substantially undermined American psychology’s moral project

The Demotion of God and Elevation of Humanity

The Necessary Virtue of God

Edwards began the inquiry of Part III by examining “the virtue and agency of the supreme moral Agent, and fountain of all agency and virtue” (III.1.2).

Edwards quoted Whitby to illustrate the Arminian belief that he desired to refute.

Whitby proclaimed, “if all human actions are necessary, virtue and vice must be empty names; we being capable of nothing that is blameworthy, or deserveth praise; for who can blame a person for doing only what he could not help, or judge that he deserveth praise only for what he could not avoid?” Whitby’s insistence that necessity and virtue are in conflict apparently did not apply to his notion of God, however. He plainly affirmed that God’s actions, which are necessarily good, do not possess this type of freedom (III.1.3).

Edwards thought this conflict highly significant. God, Arminians and Calvinists agreed, is necessarily good, the source of all good found in humans, and is therefore worthy of praise and approbation. Yet, given the Arminian belief that virtue and necessity are incompatible, “this being...has no virtue at all.” Although the Arminian may call God’s holy attributes good, they are good in the same way that the sun is good, or the rain. Yet, the Arminian would be inconsistent to call God *morally* good, for he lacks the requisite freedom from necessity (III.1.4).

Yet here the Arminian is forced to contradict the very plain teaching of scripture, that God is necessarily virtuous in all he does. Edwards declined to offer proof texts to prove this point because such an exercise would be “altogether needless to such as have been brought up under the light of the gospel” (III.1.5). This passage is helpful in that it grants a sense of Edwards’ perceived audience. Edwards took for granted that his

audience would have been broadly Christian, and would have had a rudimentary knowledge of the Bible.

Given the Arminian belief that virtue requires freedom from necessity, one must come to an unthinkable conclusion. “Men are worthy of that esteem...which yet God is not worthy of.” Human beings possess a kind of moral excellency which does not and cannot have God as its fountain. Human beings therefore enjoy a status of moral “pre-eminence” relative to God. The moral excellency of human beings outshines the moral excellency of God. The highest praise therefore ought to be reserved for humans (III.1.6). Edwards took it for granted that these *theological* consequences of the Arminian notion of freedom would weigh heavily upon Arminian minds. What might have been the consequences of a moral culture that exalts human nature above the ideals it purportedly values most? In Ames, God was the supreme efficiency bestowing upon his creatures a measure of efficiency. The virtue of human beings was therefore derivative. In the Arminian scheme, human beings possess an efficiency that God can not impart.

What praise and respect should be given to humans for their pre-eminence? Since the scripture represents God as worthy of all glory and honor, Edwards wondered what special commendation can human beings receive over and above the praise due to God? (III.1.7). The puzzle is solved, of course, if one rejects the Arminian notion of liberty. Furthermore, if it is true that the necessity of God’s moral goodness precludes him from receiving praise, there is no more reason to give God thanks for that goodness than there is reason to thank a person for a benefit which they were compelled to bestow (III.1.8).

Yet all of this Edwards took to be so much nonsense. In Edwards mind, the God of the Bible was to be praised and thanked for his goodness (III.1.9).

The Necessary Virtue of Christ

Just as Whitby argued that virtue requires freedom from necessity (a point Edwards attempted to refute in the previous section), Whitby also argued that this freedom from necessity is needed for one to be subject to moral law and therefore liable to praise or blame (III.2.1). With this in mind, Edwards moved to a consideration of the “moral conduct and practice of our Lord Jesus Christ” in his life on earth. Edwards sought to demonstrate two things about Christ. First, “that his holy behavior was necessary,” and second, that his holy behavior was indeed virtuous and worthy of praise and reward (III.2.2).

Edwards offered eleven points to prove that Christ’s holiness was necessary, i.e., that “it was impossible” that Christ’s holy acts could have been “otherwise than holy, and agreeable to God’s nature and will” (III.2.3). To prove the point Edwards again turned to biblical exegesis. Although he did not offer the stipulation that he did earlier that this analysis applied only to those who “own the truth of the bible” (II.11.4), he must have assumed it here. One example of this exegetical proof that Christ was necessarily holy is that God had prophetically promised to uphold the messiah “by his Spirit...that he should not fail...” (III.2.4). Likewise the promises made by God to the messiah of a future kingdom of glory could not have been kept had Christ fallen into sin (III.2.7). Further, “it was often promised to the church of God of old, for their comfort, that God would give them a righteous, sinless Saviour. Jer.23:5,6...” (III.2.8). The eleventh and final point was that Christ himself was “abundant in positively predicting his own future

glory...” These predictions would have had no credibility had Christ failed to remain spotless (III.2.16). Edwards concluded this relatively lengthy section thus “Thus it is evident, that it was *impossible* that the acts of the will of the human soul of Christ should be otherwise than holy, and conformed to the will of the Father...” (III.2.17).

Edwards explained his verbosity on this topic because “some of the greatest Arminians...” had denied the necessity of Christ’s holiness. Stunningly, Edwards confessed, “I look upon it as a point clearly and absolutely determining the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, concerning the necessity of such a freedom of will as is insisted on by the latter, in order to moral agency, virtue, command or prohibition, promise or threatening, reward or punishment, praise or dispraise, merit or demerit” (III.2.18). This quote is another and perhaps the most convincing illustrating the ambiguity of Edwards’ project. Was Edwards writing as a secular writer? As a Calvinist theologian or an enlightened philosopher? Writing to Calvinists, Arminians, or others? Most of Edwards prose had a “secular” flavor and could have invited readers of many persuasions. Still, Edwards was writing with a strong sectarian perspective, which only grows clearer as The Freedom of the Will progresses.

As promised, Edwards then turned to consider whether Christ’s necessarily holy actions could be considered virtuous (III.2.19). Although Whitby argued that commands and prohibitions require a freedom from necessity (or a “liberty *ad utrumlibet*” which is, according to Ramsey a “freedom to choose either of two things, or to act in either way or direction, *whichever one pleases*”; III.2.20), Christ was clearly subject to commands in the biblical account.

Whitby also argued that “promises offered as motives” for holy action undermine liberty *ad utrumlibet*. Edwards thought that Whitby’s contention was “demonstrably false, if the Christian religion be true. If there be any truth in Christianity, or the holy Scriptures,” it is that Christ’s will, though necessarily good, also “had promises of glorious rewards.” Further, Christ offered rewards to those who would follow him. When the biblical account is analyzed on Arminian premises, one is left with the startling conclusion that Christ’s holy actions were not praiseworthy because “his will was not indifferent, and free either to these things, or the contrary; but under such a strong inclination or bias to the things that were excellent, as made it *impossible* that he should choose the contrary.”

Edwards attempted to show on scriptural and theological grounds how shocking such a conclusion must be for the Christian. Not only does the Bible ascribe the highest praiseworthiness to Christ (III.2.23), but it also reveals that part of Christ’s earthly mission was to be a “most fit and proper example” of praiseworthy virtue (III.2.24). God the Father is frequently portrayed as pleased with Christ’s holiness (III.2.25), and so too are the angels in heaven reported as worshipping Christ for his holy actions on earth (III.2.26). Christ is also frequently portrayed as having received great reward for his virtuous earthly ministrations (III.2.27). Edwards thought it therefore safe to conclude that Christ was under a moral necessity to do good, yet was rightfully subject to the praise and approval of one obedient to the moral law, thereby undermining Arminian principles. Necessity and praiseworthy virtue are indeed consistent given the biblical data.

The Undermining of Culpability, Moral Law, and Virtue

Necessity, Blameworthiness and the Undermining of Culpability

Just as the case of Christ proved that necessity can coexist with moral merit, Edwards then turned to prove that necessity can coexist with moral demerit. Contrary to this, Whitby thought that freedom from necessity was also prerequisite to sin. That is, it must be “in our power to perform or forbear” an evil act in order for it to be considered a sin (III.3.1).

To refute this idea, Edwards turned to the biblical passages that indicate that God may at times “give people over” to their sinful desires, i.e., allow a person’s evil desires to have full sway without restraining grace. Edwards reminded his readers that the Bible does teach that God gives some people over to their sin, such as “Ps. 81:12, ‘So I gave them up to their own hearts’ lust, and they walked in their own counsels’” (III.3.2). The consequence of the Arminian assumption that necessity and blameworthiness are incompatible, Edwards pointed out, was that when God “gives up” people to their sinfulness, the actions which flow from the resultant inability to refrain from sinning are no longer culpably sinful (III.3.3). Judas was clearly destined to betray Christ: his sinful action was necessary. Yet according to the Arminian scheme, so too would Judas be excused for his sinful behavior (III.3.4).

Yet contrary to the scriptural evidence, Whitby denied “that men, in this world, are ever so given up by God to sin, that their wills should be necessarily determined to evil.” [clearly revealing that the issue here is biblical exegesis not pure reason]. Interestingly, Edwards’ description of Whitby fits Thomas Upham’s position very well when he notes that “...it may become ‘exceeding difficult’ for men to do good, having a

strong bent, and powerful inclination to what is evil.” Yet Whitby, like Upham, still believed that a total loss of ability was rare. Still, Edwards thought that this position did not help Whitby very much, for if the necessity of sinning “wholly” excused the sin, then “its being difficult to avoid it excuses him in part” (III.3.5). The consequence of this line of thinking is that the more strongly inclined a will is to unholiness, the less blamable that person becomes (III.3.6).

Edwards also thought that Whitby and other Arminians were inconsistent as theologians. Like the Calvinists, Whitby affirmed “that fallen man is not able to perform perfect obedience,” and is not capable as Adam was to continue in a sinless estate. Yet, to concede that fallen humans are inclined to sin is to argue that the human will is out of the perfect indifference that is supposed to be so necessary for freedom. Edwards wondered, then, “why does he cry out of the unreasonableness and folly of commanding beyond what men have power to do?” (III.3.10). The Arminian’s own doctrine concerning the effects of the fall affirms this very thing. Not only Whitby, but “Arminians in general are very inconsistent with themselves in what they say of the inability of fallen man in this respect.” Here Edwards enters into the heart of a sectarian theological dispute. Arminians declared that humans are inclined by the fall to sin, and that Christ died so that these imperfections might be forgiven. Yet, to accommodate human weakness, God overruled the moral law that humans were originally under and accepts the sincere attempts to obey this mitigated law (III.3.11).

Edwards, perhaps getting a bit off target, here challenges the coherency of the Arminian position on the relation between law, Christ’s death, and moral agency. If God really did overrule the moral law, why did Christ have to die? This new law does not

expect perfection, and so would not require a sacrifice to atone for the sin of imperfection. “What need of his suffering, to satisfy for that which is no fault...?” Why did Jesus need to die when God had already developed a way in which imperfect obedience could be accepted? Edwards’ explication is more detailed than this, but it is important to stress how easily Edwards slides into a critique of an entire theological *system*. Clearly, Edwards is concerned with Arminianism as a whole, and not just the Arminian position on the will, although he sees this position on the will as the root of a host of errors.

The Undermining of Moral Law

One variation of the Arminian insistence that virtue and necessity contradict was that God would never command something that an agent cannot do (III.4.1). In section four, Edwards hoped to demonstrate that moral commands and moral inability are indeed compatible concepts. To this end, Edwards made three major points.

The first point is related to the ambiguity inherent in the term ability. Recall that Edwards had previously laid out the distinction between natural and moral ability, a distinction based upon the difference between natural and moral *causes*. This distinction in the end amounts to non-voluntary and voluntary causes. Therefore, given Edwards’ definitions, the inability in question here in the Arminian dispute is moral.

Although God is concerned with the outward expressions of obedience, it is “the will itself, and not only those actions which are the effects of the will,” which are the “proper object” of the command. It is the soul itself which receives commands, bodily action is accountable to moral law only to the extent that the bodily action is under the control of the soul. And the only faculty of the soul which can obey or disobey

commandment is the will. Here again Edwards' discussion of the will shows how broad of a conception he had, compared to an Upham or James who tended to think of will in much more narrow terms. "'Tis by this faculty only, that the soul can directly disobey, or refuse compliance; for the very notions of 'consenting,' 'yielding,' 'accepting,' 'complying,' refusing,' 'rejecting,' etc. are, according to the meaning of the terms, nothing but certain acts of the will.'" Sounding much like Ames, Edwards defined obedience as "the submitting and yielding of the will of one to the will of another." Disobedience is likewise the refusal of this submission. Therefore, when God commands obedience, he commands the will.

This passage also helps to highlight the cosmic significance of the concept of will in the Puritan universe. Human beings are defined by their obedience or disobedience to the supreme Being. This disobedience or obedience has "in the primary nature of it" (III.4.3) to do with the conformity of the human will to the divine will. In the Puritan world, the loss of the concept of will would be the loss of the way in which the relation between humanity and divinity was understood. Since volition and the divine-human relation were correlative ideas, it is perhaps not surprising that the loss of one of these ideas (the divine-human relationship) was quickly followed by the loss of the other idea (volition).

As a corollary to this, it follows that if there are a series of acts of volition, the command is directed always to the "*first and determining act*," i.e., the act that is at the root of all subsequent acts (III.4.4). A second corollary is that if there is "any sort of act" preceding the first volitional act, this act cannot be subject to command because it is by definition non-volitional (and command is directed only to the will; III.4.5). Edwards

had in mind here his previous analysis in which he criticized the Arminian notion of self-determining will for requiring either an act of will to proceed the first act of will (which is a contradiction) or something else to precede the first act of will (which also contradicts the tenets of self-determination). If the soul does determine every act of volition in this latter way, it cannot be subject to command since it is not a will. For this and other reasons, humanity cannot be the subject of command and there is “no room left for virtue or vice in the world” (III.4.6).

And so the tables are turned on the Arminians, who claimed that it was the Calvinist system that undermined morality. Indeed, there is no way “whatsoever” to make Arminian precepts consistent with the cherished notions of “moral government, and with all use of laws, precepts, prohibitions, promises, or threatenings” (III.4.7). To add insult to injury Edwards also argues that the notion of indifference also undermines the very coherence of the notion of moral command.

The second point Edwards made to argue that inability is not inconsistent with command is that the present will is by nature *always unable* to do anything other than what it at present is actually doing (III.4.8).

Edwards here reviewed the distinction between natural and moral inability, reminding his readers that “a man may...be said to be morally unable to do a thing, when he is under the influence of prevalence of a contrary inclination, or has a want of inclination, under such circumstances and views.” Further, the will is always determined by the strongest motive, and is therefore not able to resist this strongest motive (III.4.9). Edwards offered several clarifications of this point and answered several objections (III.4.10-17).

In this context, Edwards made a helpful point which clarified his position on habits. Although *every* act of disobedience evidences moral inability to obey in that moment, Edwards also conceded that in a certain way inability may be greater in certain acts than others. “A person whose strength is no more than sufficient to one hundred and one points, as ten thousand pounds; but yet he is further from being able to lift the latter weight than the former” (III.4.307). Another way to express the same idea (borrowing from the Introduction), is that some may have a “general” or “habitual” inability to do a certain act, while others have a “occasional” or “particular” inability. Here it is helpful to see that Edwards did acknowledge that it is harder to change “habitual” volitions than “particular,” but that he considered both voluntary.

Pulling his first two points together, that commands are directed toward the will, and that an act of disobedience implies inability in that act, it appears to the case that commands are sometimes directed toward a will that is presently unable to obey. Inability and commandment are therefore not inconsistent with one another (III.4.18). A commandment must be able to require a state of will that does not presently exist. If this were not the case, if commandments could only prescribe actions that are already underway, then the usefulness of the commandment would be undermined. Indeed, the commandment would be “perfectly vain and impertinent” (III.4.19). If not, there could be no such thing as disobedience, a point which no Arminian would consciously affirm. Further, if inability excuses disobedience, and wickedness is the possession of wicked inclinations which render obedience impossible, it follows that “wickedness always carries that in it which excuses it.” Indeed, the more evilly inclined the sinner, the more excused the sinner becomes in this train of thinking. “His moral inability, consisting in

the strength of his evil inclination, is the very thing wherein his wickedness consists; and yet according to Arminian principles, it must be a thing inconsistent with wickedness; and by how much the more he has got it, by so much is he the further from wickedness” (III.4.20). It only makes sense, then, that moral inability does not excuse a person from commandment.

Edwards closed this section with comments that I will not develop here, except to say that he argues that natural inability (as opposed to moral inability) *does* indeed excuse. “If men are excused from doing or acting any good thing, supposed to be commanded, it must be through some defect or obstacle that is not in the will itself, but extrinsic to it; either in the capacity of understanding, or body, or outward circumstances” (III.4.22). Helpful here is Edwards’ reiteration of the belief that the understanding was considered a *natural* rather than a moral cause of behavior.

In the next section, Edwards turned to an issue “insisted on by many” that people may be unable to obey the commands of God and yet be “sincere” in their desire to obey and therefore excused for their shortcomings. This controversy is perhaps impertinent to this dissertation as it deals with an issue that was not a major concern of Upham or James. Although Upham and James used the words related to “sincere,” the usages are fairly minimal. In his refutation of this idea, Edwards fell back on some of the basic principles of his psychological system, such as the idea that the strongest desire determines volition, and therefore a weak and an “insufficient and ineffectual” wish cannot be considered a “true desire” (III.5.1,5).

Indifference and the Loss of Virtue

So too is the case with Section 6 of the Freedom of the Will, in which Edwards attempts to dismantle the idea that indifference is necessary for true liberty and true virtue. Upham and James tended to be Arminians of a different stripe, recognizing that the human mind is rarely (if ever) indifferent to moral objects of volition. They tended to lean in the direction of a Chubb who thought that the will could act as an arbiter among the various motives presented to the mind. Nevertheless, this section is still relevant in that it outlines Edwards understanding of how motives worked.

According to Arminians, indifference is requisite for the liberty of the will. In order for an action to be virtuous, it must be performed in liberty, and therefore “the heart must be indifferent in the time of the performance of that act, and the more indifferent and cold the heart is with relation to the act which is performed, so much the better; because the act is performed with so much the greater liberty.” Edwards thought that this did not agree with the “light of nature” and the historic belief of “mankind” which tended to think that virtue *required* an inclination toward the good, and that “the stronger the inclination, and so the further from indifference, the more virtuous the *heart*, and so much the more praiseworthy the *act* which proceeds from it” (III.6.2). At another point Edwards calls this the “common sense” viewpoint (III.6.3).

On Arminian principles, it is only an act of will made in a state of indifference that can be virtuous. Once a motive or inclination is set before the mind, it is no longer in a state of indifference, and can therefore no longer be considered free and virtuous. Some Arminians might counter and say that the act is free if the will can suspend acting for a time and take things into closer consideration. Yet, since only an action done with

freedom can be virtuous, then only the act of suspending action can be virtuous in this scheme of things. Either way, the common sense notion that virtue consists in strong inclinations toward the good is overridden (III.6.3).

Added to this sad state of affairs is the Arminian notion that a free act must be self-determined, which, Edwards thought, contradicted the idea that a virtuous act must be indifferent. For any self-determined action must be determined by a preceding act of will, and this preceding act of will must put subsequent acts of will out of the state of indifference. “So that neither one way, nor the other, can any actions be virtuous or vicious according to Arminian principles. If the action *be determined* by a preceding act of choice it can’t be virtuous; because the action is not done in a state of indifference...If the action *be not determined* by a preceding choice, then it can’t be virtuous; because then the will is not self-determined.” Virtue and vice therefore have no place in the Arminian “universe.” [What Edwards did not offer here, nor anywhere (I believe) in Freedom is evidence that any Arminian actually did simultaneously affirm these separate notions of freedom.]

Edwards offered other arguments against indifference as prerequisites to virtue. For one, he thought it also to be “common sense” that indifference to evil *is* evil (III.6.5). Further, positing indifference as essential to liberty “is utterly inconsistent with the being of any such things as either virtuous or vicious habits or dispositions. If liberty of *indifference* be essential to moral agency, then there can be no virtue in any habitual inclinations of the heart; which are contrary to indifference, and imply in their nature the very destruction and exclusion of it” (III.6.7).

Likewise, the notion of the self-determining will undermines the Arminian ability to make moral sense out of habits. In order for this (self-determining) approach to work, the “scales” of the will must not be put out of balance, but this lack of balance is precisely what a habit entails. Therefore, since the self-determining power of the will cannot be involved in such an act of will, such an act can be considered neither virtuous nor blameworthy (III.6.8). Or, as Upham and James would argue, such an act might not be an act of will at all.

Conversely, it follows that the most morally praiseworthy actions are those which are “performed without any inclination or habitual bias at all” because such actions are “performed with most liberty.” In other words, the Arminian scheme inverted the notion that character, or the habitual inclination to do good, was actually a virtuous thing (III.6.9). Likewise, a vicious habit and exceedingly strong inability to do good is excused because of a lack of Arminian liberty (III.6.10). Habits therefore cannot “have anything of the nature of either virtue or vice” (III.6.11). Even the objection that habits can be virtuous *if* they are formed through indifference and self-determination (III.6.12) falls because the Arminian supposition is that virtue or vice only exist when “this liberty is [actually being] exercised” (III.6.13).

Edwards concludes on a sobering note: “On the whole it appears, that if the notions of Arminians concerning liberty and moral agency be true, it will follow that there is no virtue in any such habits or qualities as humility, meekness, patience, mercy, gratitude, generosity, heavenly-mindedness; nothing at all praiseworthy in loving Christ above father and mother, wife and children, or our own lives; or in delight in holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, love to enemies, universal benevolence to

mankind: and on the other hand, there is nothing at all vicious, or worthy of dispraise, in the most sordid, beastly, malignant, devilish dispositions; in being ungrateful, profane, habitually hating God, and things sacred and holy; or in being most treacherous, envious and cruel towards men. For all these things are dispositions and inclinations of the heart. And in short, there is no such thing as any virtuous or vicious *quality of mind*; no such thing as inherent virtue and holiness, or vice and sin: and the stronger those habits or dispositions are, which used to be called virtuous and vicious, the further they are from being so indeed; the more violent men's lusts are, the more fixed their pride, envy, ingratitude and maliciousness, still the further they are from being blameworthy (III.6.14).

In short, the Arminian notion of freedom and liberty unraveled the entire fabric of Christian morality: "...if we pursue these principles, we shall find that virtue and vice are wholly excluded out of the world..." (III.6.15).

Motives, Virtue, and the Nonexistence of the Arminian Will

Edwards concluded Part III of Freedom by considering the inconsistency between Arminian freedom and the effects of motives. Motives are usually thought to influence the mind either internally (by a "preponderancy of the inclination") or externally (by a "preponderancy of...circumstances"). Either effect necessarily puts the mind out of indifference, and, given the assumption that indifference is necessary for moral agency, motives therefore cannot contribute to either virtue or vice (III.7.2). If motives in any way incline the mind to move in a particular direction, liberty is destroyed and so too is the virtue or vice of an action influenced by that motive (III.7.3-8).

Here again Edwards impugns the Arminian position on the grounds of common sense. Any choice made from a good motive, such as “prudence or wisdom” cannot be virtuous. Such a choice would have been made with a “good end” in mind, and so moved by this consideration would have lost its virtue in proportion to the strength of the inclination to the good end. A truly virtuous action from an Arminian viewpoint, i.e., one done in indifference, would need to be done for “no good end” at all, and without any “good intention.” Yet, according to our natural intuitions of morality, such an act would have “no more virtue in it than in the motion of the smoke, which is driven to and fro by the wind, without any aim or end in the thing moved.”

Edwards then turned the tables on the Arminians once again, using an argument that they were fond of levying against the Calvinists. If God has predestined some to be saved, the Arminian asked, what use is it to exhort, command, and encourage a person to repent? After all, whatever will be will be. Edwards thought his analysis proved that it was actually Arminian assumptions which led to “that horrid blasphemous consequence” that God’s exhortations are “insincere and fallacious,” for the effect of such exhortations is only to throw the will out of its equilibrium and thereby to deprive it of the opportunity to act virtuously (i.e., in indifference). Therefore, Edwards victoriously concluded, “...*theirs* is the doctrine which if pursued in its consequences, does horribly reflect on the most High, and fix on him the charge of hypocrisy; and not the doctrine of the Calvinist” (III.7.12, italics mine). Given all of the above, the Arminian doctrine “shut[s] all virtue out of the world...” (III.7.13)

Most prophetically in view of the goals of this dissertation, Edwards concluded:

‘Tis manifest, that Arminian notions of moral agency, and *the being* of a faculty

of will, cannot consist together; and that if there be any such thing as, either a virtuous, or vicious act, it can't be an act of will; no will can be at all concerned in it. For that act which is performed without inclination, without motive, without end, must be performed without any concern of the will. To suppose an act of the will without these, implies a contradiction. If the soul in its act has no motive or end; then in that act (as was observed before) it seeks nothing, goes after nothing, and chooses nothing; so that there is no act of choice in the case: and this is as much to say, there is no act of will in the case. Which very effectually shuts out all vicious and virtuous acts out of the universe; inasmuch as, according to this, there can be no vicious or virtuous act wherein the will is concerned; and according to the plainest dictates of reason, and the light of nature, and also the principles of Arminians themselves, there can be no virtuous or vicious act wherein the will is not concerned. And therefore there is no room for any virtuous or vicious acts at all. (III.7.14)

By teaching that the will is always involved in virtuous action, and, by implication, that the will cannot be involved in virtuous action, Arminianism undermined not only morality, but the very existence of will itself. It would take nearly a century and a half for this to become manifest in American psychology.

Summary and Conclusion

Having disposed of the Arminian notion of the freedom of the will on rational grounds in Parts I and II of Freedom of the Will, Edwards turned to discuss the theological and moral consequences of the Arminian notion in Part III. Shockingly, Edwards argued, the Arminians had elevated the moral status of humanity *above* the

moral status of God. Even the Arminians conceded that God's activities were necessarily virtuous. By then arguing that necessity is incompatible with freedom, they were arguing that God is not free in his actions, and that human beings therefore possess a dignity that not even God himself possesses. Edwards applied the same line of argumentation to the life of Jesus Christ, arguing, first, that Christ's "holy behavior was necessary" and, second, that his holy behavior was still worthy of praise and reward. The goal of this argument was to problematize the Arminian belief that necessity was incompatible with praise and blame.

Just as Christ's actions were necessarily holy and yet infinitely praiseworthy, Edwards next attempted to demonstrate that necessarily evil actions must also be blameworthy given, for example, that the Bible explicitly teaches that some evil actions (like the betrayal of Christ by Judas) were predestined. If the Arminian notion that necessity is incompatible with responsibility is granted, then Judas could not be held responsible for his actions.

Contrary to Arminian teaching, Edwards also challenged the assumption that commands are incompatible with moral inability. As we saw in William Ames, Puritanism taught that the fall of Adam had rendered humanity unable to obey God's commands, and yet human beings are still responsible for this disobedience. One line of argumentation Edwards employed here was that the very notion of command makes no sense in the Arminian scheme of things. Commands are addressed to the will, particularly the "*first and determining act*" of the will (III.4.4). Referring back to his refutation of self-determination in which he showed that a self-determining will can never actually have a first act, Edwards concluded that commands have no object in the

Arminian universe and are therefore useless. Further, when a person engages in any act, that person is by definition unable to engage in another act. When a person disobeys a command, that person is *at that moment* unable to simultaneously obey the command. Therefore inability and command are compatible concepts.

Arminians also argued that indifference is a requirement for liberty and therefore praiseworthiness or blameworthiness. Edwards thought that this conception clearly undermined the common sense view of the matter. Typically, people believe that being strongly inclined toward the good and strongly averse to evil are good things. The Arminian position is against this common sense intuition, arguing in effect that a cold heart is more virtuous than one with a strong bent toward the good. Further, Edwards added, the notions of indifference and self-determination are incompatible. For a will to determine itself is to incline itself in a particular direction. But as soon as the inclination takes place, the virtue of the act is removed if Arminian assumptions are granted. Finally, if indifference is prerequisite to virtue, then all merit associated with holy habits and dispositions is lost. The tendency of Arminianism, therefore, is to altogether undermine and even reverse traditional notions of virtue and vice.

Edwards concluded his consideration of the “blasphemous consequence[s]” of Arminianism by, once again, turning the tables. Arminians were fond of saying that the predestinarian flavor of Calvinism tended to undermine morality and impugn God’s justice. Given the above considerations, however, it is the Arminian system that undermines morality and leads to the ultimate blasphemy: that God’s commands are actually given in insincerity. Since the commands of God throw the will out of

equilibrium, the liberty of indifference is lost. If Arminian premises are granted, God's issue of commands actually undermines virtue.

Perhaps most prophetically, Edwards argued that "Arminian notions of moral agency" tended to undermine the very existence of the faculty of the will. If virtue must be performed without inclination or purpose, as Arminians suppose, then virtue must not be an act of will because acts of will are necessarily inclinational. Since Arminians insist that there can be no virtue without the will, Edwards argued that the will therefore appears to have every part, and no part, in Arminian virtue.

CHAPTER VI

A CALVINIST'S LAST STAND

In Part IV and the Conclusion of Freedom of the Will, we find that Edwards' main concerns were indeed theological concerns. Although the first sections of the treatise do have a "secular" flavor, Edwards ends the book on a more pronounced sectarian note. Part IV of Freedom was entitled: "Wherein the Chief Grounds of the Reasonings of Arminians, in Support and Defense of the Forementioned Notions of Liberty, Moral Agency, etc. and Against the Opposite Doctrine, Are Considered." Once again, Edwards' strivings against Arminianism had a prophetic edge when considered as a part of the unfolding story of the will in American psychology. The "reasonings" that Edwards challenged in these pages, including those having to do with "common sense," the notion of "fatality," the disdain of "metaphysics," and the trust of introspection, would continue to characterize American psychological thinking for a century and a half, seeping into the writings of Thomas Upham and William James.

Anticipating and Explaining the Assumptions of American Moral Psychology

As Edwards attempted to confront the "reasonings" of Arminians, he enumerated a number of assumptions that would come to characterize American moral psychology for over a century.

The Essence of Virtue

Edwards took exception to the Arminian idea that "the virtuousness of the dispositions or acts of the will consists...in the origin or cause of them," as opposed to

consisting in their nature. Only when the will is the cause of an act, the Arminians contended, can the person be at fault, and only then can the act be blameworthy. Edwards noted with a degree of disbelief that Arminians took this to be self-evident (IV.1.1), a notion that Edwards regarded as “a gross absurdity” (IV.1.2).

If the virtue or vice of an action does not lie in its nature, it does not and cannot exist at all. To prove this point, Edwards tried to show that here again the Arminian is forced down the path of infinite regress and absurdity. If a particular sinful action is sinful because of its cause, how does one determine whether that cause (which must be an action) is sinful? According to the rule that the sinfulness of an action lies in its cause, one must determine the sinfulness of that cause (which is an action) by *its* cause. And the sinfulness of *that* cause is likewise determined by the cause of that cause. In this scheme “we must drive faultiness back from step to step, from a lower cause to a higher, *in infinitum*: and that is thoroughly to banish it from the world...” The only thing, then, that can actually be considered blameworthy is a cause that is *only* a cause. Yet this will not work because one must be able to the cause of an action in order to ascertain its goodness or badness. The only criterion that is left to make the moral judgment is the nature of the cause, the very criterion the Arminian attempts to deny (IV.1.3).

Edwards thought he had common sense and the “natural notions of mankind” on his side here. Evil “consists in a certain *deformity* in the *nature* of certain dispositions of the heart, and acts of the will; and not in the deformity of *something else*, diverse from the very thing itself, which deserves abhorrence, supposed to be the cause of it. Which would be absurd, because that would be to suppose, a thing that is innocent and not evil,

is truly evil and faulty, because another thing is evil.” The Arminian position amounts to saying that “vice don’t consist in vice, but in that which produces it” (IV.1.5).

Edwards speculated as to why the Arminians arrived at the idea that the goodness or badness of a moral action is determined by its cause by drawing an analogy with a case when the cause of an action does indeed determine its goodness or badness. “...It is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense” that the moral good or evil of “*outward actions*” (or “sensible motions of the body”) depends not upon their nature, but upon the will that produces them. In other words, the goodness or badness of a particular bodily motion depends upon its cause. The confusion here may have resulted from the fact that, at some unspecified point, the terms signifying the internal reality of will (e.g., inclinations, volitions, etc.) began to be replaced with terms signifying outward behavior (e.g., actions). By failing to pay close attention to the difference between moral and natural phenomenon, the Arminians were led into this particular error. It is worth noting that we find in Upham and especially in James the same tendency to equate volitions with outward (or muscular) activity (IV.1.10).

Action and Agency

Edwards took exception to the Arminian’s “*metaphysical notion of agency and action.*” As he understood it, this notion was that:

...Unless the soul has a self-determining power, it has no power of ‘action’; if its volitions be not caused by itself, but are excited and determined by some extrinsic cause, they can’t be the soul’s own ‘acts’; and that the soul can’t be ‘active,’ but must be wholly ‘passive,’ in those effects which it is the subject of necessarily, and not from its own free determination. (IV.2.1)

Chubb's own particular manifestation of this belief was the assertion that self-determination is the essence of action, and that "it is impossible for a man to act and be acted upon, in the same thing, at the same time; and that nothing that is an action, can be the effect of the action of another..." (IV.2.2).

Chubb's notion of agency therefore stipulated that action can be "under the power, influence or action of no cause" whatsoever. Similarly, in an argument sounding much like William Ames's description of God, human action is never an effect, "for to be an effect implies *passiveness*, or the being subject to the power and action of its cause." Yet this is an inconsistent position because a self-determined action *is* an effect, an effect of a preceding choice of the will. The same problem inheres in the idea that free actions are contingent, i.e., having "no necessary dependence or connection with anything foregoing." Yet the idea of self-determination plainly posits that acts of will are necessarily connected with preceding acts of will. Likewise, Edwards reiterates previously mentioned inconsistencies with the idea of self-determination. He sums his criticism thus:

So that according to their notion of an act, considered with regard to its consequences, these following things are all essential to it; viz. that it should be necessary, and not necessary; that it should be from a cause, and no cause; that it should be the fruit of choice and design, and not the fruit of choice and design; that it should be the beginning of motion or exertion, and yet consequent on a previous exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of indifference and equilibrium, and yet be the effect of preponderation; that it should be self-originated, and also have its original from something else; that it is

what the mind causes itself, of its own will, and can produce or prevent, according to its choice or pleasure, and yet what the mind has no power to prevent, it precluding all previous choice in the affair. (IV.2.5)

Given this series of contradictions, and relevant to the “loss of will” this dissertation explores, Edwards thought that this notion of action “is an absolute nonentity.” By implication, then, the Arminian will was a nonentity. As we explore the psychology of Upham and James, one might be able to conclude that their notions of volition, predicated upon similar notions of self-determination, did posit a rather vacuous notion of will. Although it seems certain that “the will” of Edwards and the Puritans was lost to American psychology textbooks in the early nineteenth century, it may also be the case that, in the American context at least, to have lost *that* will was to lose the reality of will itself (IV.2.6).

Further, another part of the problem was that Arminian psychology had changed the original meaning of the term “action.” The common usage of the term action “seems to be some motion or exertion of power, that is voluntary, or that is the *effect* of the will; and is used in the same sense as “doing”: and most commonly ‘tis used to signify *outward* actions. So thinking is often distinguished from acting; and desiring and will, from doing” (IV.2.7). Other less common yet valid ways of using the term “action,” include describing the motions of corporeal things “especially when these motions seem to arise from some internal cause which is *hidden*; so that they have a greater resemblance of those motions of our bodies, which are the effects of internal volition, or invisible exertions of will.” Only very rarely does one find the term action applied the

thoughts or volitions, unless one reads the “philosophers and metaphysicians” who co-opted the term for their own (apparently Arminian) purposes.

The word action is “never used in vulgar speech” in the way that Arminian theologians use it as “an exertion of the soul that arises without any necessary connection with anything foregoing” (IV.2.9). Typically the term was applied to individuals who do things voluntarily, regardless of the cause of that action.

Edwards really did understand the self-determined will to be central to the Arminian theological and metaphysical substructure.

To answer the objection that Edwards’ psychology confounds passion and action, he clarified that these words signify opposite “*relations*” not opposite “*existences*.” The terms are similar in this way to the terms cause and effect. And just as one event may be simultaneously an effect of one thing and a cause of another, so too a volition may simultaneously have a “passiveness” relative to some causal factor, and an “activeness” relative to something that it influences. “...To suppose, that there are acts of the soul by which a man voluntarily moves, and acts upon objects, and produces effects, which yet themselves are effects of something else, and wherein the soul itself is the object of something acting upon, and influencing that, don’t at all confound ‘action’ and ‘passion.’” (IV.2.12). Action may be, and indeed is, both a cause and effect.

Just as Edwards speculated as to why the Arminians arrived at the idea that the goodness or badness of a moral action is determined by a knowledge of its cause, so too Edwards speculated how this “inconsistent notion of action, when applied to volition” came to be. In order to properly describe a person’s movements as an action, it must be the result of that person’s voluntary determination. “Hence some metaphysicians have

been led unwarily, but exceeding absurdly, to suppose the same concerning volition itself, that that also must be determined by the will; which is to be determined by antecedent volition, as the motion of the body is; not considering the contradiction it implies” (IV.2.13). The other reason for the confusion had to do with the imprecision of the “metaphysical distinction” between action and passion. Just as these terms have been deemed to signify opposite existences, so too philosophers had believed that volitions had to be one or the other (IV.2.14-15). Yet, Edwards, attempting to give the Arminian mental philosophers the benefit of the doubt, argued that a little consideration would lead them to abandon the inconsistencies associated with the belief that actions cannot be necessity, given the necessity of God’s holy actions (IV.2.16).

Necessity, Praise, and Blame in Ordinary Usage

Continuing in this strain of explaining Arminian lapses in logic and common sense, Edwards addressed the strong Arminian belief that necessary actions cannot be morally good or evil. Arminians considered the belief in their incompatibility as “contrary to common sense.” Edwards was concerned that these arguments were not only making undue progress as they were being “greatly triumphed in” but that they were confusing some Calvinists who could not reconcile scriptural teaching with this purportedly universal dictate of common sense.

First, Edwards conceded that it is “indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, that *natural* necessity is wholly inconsistent with praise or blame.” If men are forced to engage in particular actions *against their wills*, i.e., if they are forced or robbed of natural ability to do something, they cannot be deemed culpable for such an action. Another truth accessible to common sense is that one’s responsibility for doing things which are

nearly impossible (i.e., nearly *naturally* impossible) is curtailed yet not eliminated by that natural difficulty. Conversely, any natural cause (i.e., a cause outside of the person's inclinations) moving a person toward an action typically deemed praiseworthy diminishes the praiseworthiness of that action. In short, as natural causes replace moral causes, the virtue or blame of the action is diminished.

Secondly, people begin to use phrases such as “‘must,’ ‘can’t,’ ‘can’t help it,’ ‘can’t avoid it,’ ‘necessary,’ ‘unable,’ ‘impossible,’ ‘unavoidable,’ ‘irresistible,’ etc.” to signify “constraint or restraint” which are both types of *natural* necessity. These words are therefore associated with the idea of “contrary will,” or the idea that necessity thwarts desire and inclination. We therefore have a “strong habit” of associating the idea of necessity with being “free...from all fault or blame” (IV.3.5). Third, it is not surprising, then, but actually very common to carry over the “ideas of innocency or blamelessness” that we learn to associate with idea of necessity into situations when there actually is no contrary will or endeavor (IV.3.5-8).

Edwards offered other reasons for why people are slow to correct this cognitive habit. For one, philosophers typically use terms necessity imprecisely, and are not in the habit of clearly defining terms and making careful discriminations between common and philosophical use of terms (IV.3.9). Further, actual similarities between the terms lead to confusion (IV.3.10).

Fourth, Edwards thought that people may “inwardly entertain” the idea that moral necessity actually *does* run against the will's sincere desire. There are some “wicked men” who are deceived into thinking that “they wish that they were good, that they loved God and holiness; but yet don't find that their wishes produce the effect.” Edwards here

rehearses the difference between true willingness and “indirect willingness,” noting that it is impossible that a will be against itself and that an ineffectual desire is not truly a will. One of the reasons for this confusion is that “men through a prejudice in their own favor, are disposed to think well of their own desires and dispositions, and to account ‘em good and virtuous, through their respect to virtue be only *indirect* and *remote*, and ‘tis nothing at all that is virtuous that truly excites or terminates their inclinations. Further, some of the terms used to describe moral necessity (e.g., “impossible,” “irresistible”) improperly imply resistance, which is, by definition, never the case in moral necessity.

Finally, people are strengthened in their tendency to think that necessity and blame are incompatible when the enormity of eternal punishment is brought to the fore. Arminians go about rhetorically “setting forth the greatness of the punishment in strong expressions: ‘That a man should be case into eternal burnings, that he should be made to fry in hell to all eternity, for those things which he had no power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfrustrable, invincible necessity of doing’” (IV.3.12).

True Common Sense

Although Edwards was not certain that his explanations for Arminian irrationality would be “thought satisfactory” by his readers, he felt more confident that he could demonstrate that moral necessity and culpability are “not at all inconsistent with the natural apprehensions of mankind...” The “common people,” i.e., those “who are furthest from having their thoughts perverted from their natural channel, by metaphysical and philosophical subtleties” are also least likely to make the Arminian error (IV.4.1). Edwards first quickly and easily defined the “vulgar notion of blameworthiness:”

...a person's being or doing wrong, with his own will and pleasure; contain[s] these two things: 1. His doing wrong, when he does as he pleases. 2. His pleasure's being wrong. Or in other words, perhaps more intelligibly expressing their notion; a person's having his heart wrong, and doing wrong from his heart. And this is the sum total of the matter (IV.4.2).

What sets the "common people" apart is that they do not "ascend up in their reflections and abstractions, to the metaphysical..." in order to ascertain the nature of praiseworthiness or blameworthiness. "If this were the case [i.e., if people needed to be metaphysicians to ascertain the nature of moral praise or blame], there are multitudes, yea, the far greater part of mankind, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand would live and die without having any such notion..." To the contrary, human beings have at a very young age "a sense of desert," which proceeds from "*experience*" and a "*natural sensation*" that some act was good or bad (IV.4.3).

Common people believe that only a person's "own acts" are morally culpable, and a person's acts are simply those things done by choice, i.e., done according to the inclinations of the heart (IV.4.4). So too common people also believe that "faulty or praiseworthy deeds" are done with liberty, but by liberty they mean the freedom to do what they desire to do, free from restraint. The idea that a free act of will must proceed from a self-determined will never crosses their minds (IV.4.5). In short, the view of the common man is precisely the view of Edwards, just more simple.

Further, if common people really thought that moral necessity and praise and blame were in opposition, then we might expect to find that praise and blame actually *decrease* as the strength of moral necessity increases (i.e., as inclinations toward the good

or evil increase). This *is*, after all, as Edwards had previously shown, precisely the common way *natural* necessity and praise and blame are found to vary (IV.4.6).

It is easy to see, however, that “the reverse of these things is true.” Clearly, when people are strongly inclined to the good they are found to be *more* worthy of praise, and those strongly inclined to the bad are found to be *more* worthy of blame (IV.4.7).

It follows then, that the Arminian notion that culpable acts are those “which [are] not determined by an antecedent bias or motive...” is fallacious. Indeed, the very opposite is true. “Men don’t think a good act to be the less praiseworthy, for the agent’s being much determined in it by a good inclination or a good motive; but the more. And if good inclination or motive has but little influence in determining the agent, they don’t think his act so much the more virtuous, but the less” (IV.4.8).

Even when “good or evil dispositions” are thought to be “implanted in the hearts of men by nature itself,” such as an arrogant or haughty nature, people not only condemn the actions which flow from that disposition, but also mention that disposition when condemning the person. Yet, when a natural necessity, i.e., a force moving “against their inclinations” the person is held to be blameless. “Thus ‘tis very plain, that common sense makes a vast difference between these two kinds of necessity [i.e., natural and moral], as to the judgment it makes of their influence on the moral quality and desert of men’s actions” (IV.4.9). Edwards thought these intuitions were so well ingrained in human nature that he “very much doubted whether the Arminians themselves have ever got rid of ‘em...” (IV.4.10).

Edwards then reinforced his points on the reality of the distinction between natural and moral necessity, and criticizes the way Arminians blur the distinction to their advantage. For example they will say:

‘That which is necessary (say they) is necessary; it is that which must be, and can’t be prevented. And that which is impossible, is impossible, and can’t be done: and therefore none can be to blame for not doing it.’ And such comparisons are made use of, as the commanding of a man to walk who has lost his legs, and condemning and punishing him for not obeying; inviting and calling upon a man, who is shut up in a strong prison, to come forth, etc. (IV.4.11)

In other words, the Arminians would deny the importance of the distinction between natural and moral necessity but then only give examples of natural necessity to prove the point that culpability and moral necessity are opposed to each other (IV.4.11).

Given these realities, Edwards concluded that Arminians couldn’t claim that their doctrine is based on common sense, but must rely on “some philosophical and metaphysical arguments” (IV.4.12). The “pretended demonstration[s] of Arminians from common sense” are based upon “a grand illusion.” There is, as he argued before, a strong habit of associating blamelessness and necessity, built upon our early encounters with natural necessity. This association is unwittingly carried into the Arminian’s metaphysical use of the term, and actually is the “foundation” of their “arrogant” ruminations. In this context Edwards reveals that he found many Arminian discourses insulting and un-Christian (concerning the “un-Christian” nature of Arminian argumentation, note his use of the term neighbor):

And this [the habit of associating necessity and blamelessness] is the main ground of all the right they have to treat their neighbors in so assuming a manner, and to insult others, perhaps as wise and good as themselves, as weak bigots, men that dwell in the dark caves of superstition, perversely set, obstinately shutting their eyes against the noonday light, enemies to common sense, maintaining the first-born of absurdities, etc. (IV.4.13)

Yet Edwards was convinced that his arguments had shown not only that the Calvinist position was none of these things, but that the status of the Arminian doctrine was in doubt: “But perhaps an impartial consideration of the things which have been observed in the preceding parts of this inquiry, may enable the lovers of truth better to judge, whose doctrine is indeed absurd, abstruse, self-contradictory, and inconsistent with common sense, and many ways repugnant to the universal dictates of the reason of mankind” (IV.4.13).

Means and Machines

Edwards then turned to discuss the Arminian objection that Calvinism turns human beings into “mere machines.” He described the objection thus:

...If it be so, that sin and virtue come to pass by a necessity consisting in a sure connection of causes and effects, antecedents and consequents, it can never be worth the while to use any means or endeavors to obtain the one, and avoid the other; seeing no endeavors can alter the futurity of the event, which is become necessary by a connection already established. (IV.5.1)

To answer this objection that endeavors and means are useless, Edwards first tried to explain what an unsuccessful use of endeavors is. He thought an endeavor could be

unsuccessful in two ways. First, when the means do not lead to the desired ends. Second, when the end comes about, but not because of the means employed. Yet if there is a connection between means and the desired end, that use of means has been successful (IV.5.3). Put into these terms, the original question, which is that necessity undermines the use of means, is transformed into the question of “whether on the supposition of there being a real and true connection between antecedent things and consequent ones, there must be less of a connection between means and effect.” Edwards thought the posing of the question sufficient to answer the question. Indeed, necessity is prerequisite to the usefulness of means: “Means are foregoing things, and effects are following things: and if there were no connection between foregoing things, and following ones, there could be no connection between means and end; and so all means would be wholly vain and fruitless.”

Even if we imagine that there is a “succession or train of antecedents and consequents, from the very beginning of all things, the connection being made already sure and necessary...” this does not hinder the efficacy of means, since these means may simply “belong to the series” of sure and necessary events (IV.5.5).

As we have come to expect, Edwards turned the table on the Arminians at this point. Clearly, the efficacy of means is established in a scheme that allows for necessity. Given the previous reasoning, it is clear that the efficacy of means actually demands necessity. Therefore, the use of means and endeavors actually makes no sense given *Arminian* presuppositions. Since free acts are contingent and self-determined, which rule out connections between virtuous action and antecedents, all connections between antecedent means and subsequent action must be excluded in the production of virtue.

Arminians are therefore precluded from using any means to the production of virtue. Such means could only serve to throw the will out of equilibrium and therefore undermine the virtue involved (IV.5.7-11).

Edwards then turned to confront the theological variety of the argument that necessity undermines duty. He offered an example of a form of this argument: “What future happiness or misery I shall have, is in effect determined by the necessary course and connection of things; therefore I will save myself the trouble of labor and diligence, which can’t add to my determined degree of happiness, or diminish my misery; but will take my ease, and will enjoy the comfort of sloth and negligence” (V.5.12). This Arminian argument, Edwards pointed out, is internally inconsistent. On the one hand it says that one cannot influence the outcome of one’s life through the use of proper means. On the other hand it does just the opposite: it posits that means (i.e., “sloth and negligence”) *will* influence future happiness (i.e., sloth will lead to “comfort”).

Finally, Edwards addressed the idea that necessity “makes men into mere machines.” To combat this conclusion, Edwards articulated his understanding of the way humans differ from machines:

“...Man is entirely, perfectly and unspeakably different from a mere machine, in that he has reason and understanding, and has a faculty of will, and so is capable of volition and choice; and in that, his will is guided by the dictates or views of his understanding; and in that his external actions and behavior, and in many respect also his thoughts, and the exercises of his mind, are subject to his will; so that he has liberty to act according to his choice, and do what he pleases; and by means of these things, is capable of moral habits and moral acts, such inclinations

and actions as according to the common sense of mankind, are worthy of praise, esteem, love and reward; or on the contrary, of disesteem detestation, indignation and punishment” (IV.5.14).

Edwards thought that these characteristics are “all the difference that can be desired, and all that can be conceived of; and indeed all that the pretensions of the Arminians themselves come to...” for the Arminians also posit the difference between man and machine in the fact that “man has a power of choosing” (IV.5.15). But if we push the issue, Edwards argued, we find that the Arminian scheme actually makes men worse than machines, for at least “machines are guided by an understanding cause.” The self-determined will, however, “is left to the guidance of nothing, but absolute blind contingency” (IV.5.16).

Stoicism, Hobbes, and Calvinism

Edwards also addressed a favorite Arminian argument against Calvinism: that by insisting that “there are no acts of the will...but what are attended with some kind of necessity,” they posited doctrine that agreed with the Stoic “doctrine of fate” and Hobbes’ doctrine of “necessity” (IV.6.1). To this Edwards simply replied that, consistent with the Calvinist notion of common grace, “there were many important truths maintained by the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, and especially the Stoics, that are never the worse for being held by them.” Indeed, it was widely held by Christian divines that the Stoics had come the closest to gospel truth of any pagan sect. Besides, Arminians had been inconsistent in their use of this rhetorical move. When Arminian theologians saw parallels between their teachings and the Stoics, they saw this as “a confirmation of their doctrine,” but when they saw a parallel between Calvinists and

Stoic philosophy, they argued that that proves Calvinism to be “heathenish” (IV.6.4).

Indeed, Edwards noted that the Arminian theology “...agrees in some respects with the opinion of the very worst of the heathen philosophers,” such as Epicurus, the “father of atheism and licentiousness” (IV.6.5).

Concerning the accusation of maintaining the same doctrine of necessity with Hobbes, Edwards claimed that he had never read Hobbes. If there is a similarity, that does not change the truth of the position “merely because it was once held by some bad man” (IV.6.7). He thought his opponents would agree that “‘tis common for the corruptions of the hearts of evil men, to abuse the best things to vile purposes.”

Further, Edwards noted in closing, the Arminians agreed with Hobbes “in many more things” than do the Calvinists (IV.6.8).

Necessity and the Divine Will

Next Edwards turned to the objection against a deterministic view of the will that if it makes humans machines, it also makes God a machine. Edwards quoted Isaac Watts here, who claimed that necessity in God would “destroy the glory of his liberty of choice,” and “make him a kind of mechanical medium of fate, and introduce Mr. Hobbes’s doctrine of fatality and necessity.” Guelzo (1989) noted that Watts (who was a Calvinist in other regards), moved in an “Arminian” direction concerning the will in order to move away from such Hobbsian fatalism. Edwards was attempting to call back such wishy-washy Calvinists back to a consistent Calvinism.

Edwards thought Watts’s claim that necessity in God’s volitions would make him a “minister of fate” played to people’s “imagination and prejudices” and blurred the issues considerably. Edwards admitted that human understanding of the operations of

God's faculties and human faculties, indeed, fairly representing even *human* psychology is an exceedingly difficult task given the limitations of human language.

Seemingly contrary to Ames, Edwards thought that "some things in God" are "consequent and dependent upon others," for example, God's knowledge and holiness are prior "in the order of nature" to God's happiness. Still, Edwards thought that the language of cause and effect was not precisely applied to the immutable God who is the cause of all things (IV.7.4). Still, Edwards had difficulty with Watts's claim that necessity in God's will was somehow demeaning to God.

Edwards thought it funny that Watts would consider it a disadvantage that God necessarily always chooses what is "wisest and best," as if this necessity were some sort of straightjacket impeding God's freedom. To the contrary, God's sovereignty by which he rightfully, independently, and wisely exercises absolute power to do whatever he pleases, is the height of perfection. "'Tis the glory and greatness of the divine sovereignty, that God's will is determined by his own infinite all-sufficient wisdom in everything; and in nothing at all is either directed by any inferior wisdom, or by no wisdom; whereby it would become senseless arbitrariness, determining and acting without reason, design or end" (IV.7.6). If God's will were *not* necessarily wise, it would be "subject to some degree of undesigning contingency; and so in the same degree liable to evil." The thought of God's will being moved "hither and thither at random, by the uncertain wind of blind contingency," was ghastly indeed (IV.7.7).

Consistent with Edwards' rhetorical strategy, he caught Watts in an inconsistency here, for Watts also claimed, "'That it is not possible for God to act otherwise, than according to this fitness and goodness in things'" (IV.7.11). If it does not diminish God's

nature to be necessarily determined by the “fitness and goodness in things,” Edwards insisted, than it is also no diminution “to be thus determined in all things (IV.7.14).

Since Watts admitted that God necessarily chooses the good when there is a “fitness and goodness in things” to be chosen, Edwards then extrapolated that if there is in every instance such a fitness or goodness, then *all* of God’s choices are likewise necessary. So in the next section of Freedom Edwards inquires if this is indeed the case, i.e., “*whether it be so indeed*, that in all the various possible things which are in God’s view, and may be considered as capable objects of his choice, there is not evermore a preferableness in one thing above another.” Watts had denied this, but Edwards attempted to prove that it was indeed the case (IV.8.1).

Edwards intended to challenge two arguments that were used to prove Watts’s point. The first point is that “in many instances” there are no differences between the possible objects of choice. The second point is that there is only a very small and therefore insignificant difference between these objects. Edwards went to lengths to show that these points still do not diminish the fact that God volitions are indeed morally necessary.

The Author of Sin

Edwards next turned to perhaps the most popular of Arminian objections to the necessity of human volition: that the first cause of these volitions is “the author of sin,” and those so determined by this first cause are therefore absolved of their sinful actions. Edwards’ first reply to this objection is that it simply does not help the Arminian cause, even if it is true.

Again, the Arminians were inconsistent in arguing this point. For one, Whitby had argued that if God withholds the assistance that a human being needs to avoid sin that makes God the author of sin just as much as if he were the efficient cause of it. Yet this assertion is inconsistent with another contention of Whitby's, that God had withdrawn his restraining hand from "the devils and damned spirits" which had resulted in deepest wickedness. If God's withholding grace from humans makes him the author of human sin, Edwards noted, his withholding of grace from devils makes him the author of that sin as well. "And doubtless the later is as odious an effect as the former" (IV.9.4).

Arminians, arguing that the necessary connection of cause and effect makes God the author of sin, were saying in effect: "...that for God to be the author or orderer of those things which he knows beforehand, will infallibly be attended with such a consequence, is the same thing in effect, as for him to be the author of that consequence." Again, the Arminians are not helped by this argument from knowledge of consequences. God's foreknowledge, which most Arminians embraced, certainly implied knowledge of consequence, i.e., the knowledge that, given the way in which he made the world, certain sins will inevitably follow. For example, he knew beforehand that if he made a man named Judas during a certain time and at a certain place, that he would certainly sin by betraying Christ. Edwards did not deny that this is a theological difficulty, he just denied that it was one with which only Calvinists had to deal. Instead, it was "a difficulty wherein the Arminians share with us" (IV.9.6).

Since Arminians blamed Calvinists for making God the "author of sin" Edwards thought it important to define the phrase. He emphatically denied that he or any Calvinist held God to be the author of the sin if that means the actual "doer" of sin, or "the sinner."

God cannot sin, but is instead perfectly holy in all he does. Yet, if “author of sin” means “the permitter, or not a hinderer of sin; and at the same time, a disposer of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy and most excellent ends and purposes, that sin, if it be permitted or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow: I say, if this be all that is meant, by being the author of sin, I don’t deny that God is the author of sin...” Still, Edwards admitted to disliking the phrase because it usually carries the former meaning. But, in light of the acceptable definition, the Arminian too must agree that God is the author of sin in that sense (IV.9.8).

Edwards followed this contention with a long list of scriptural passages proving that God is the author of sin in the limited sense, beginning with the case of God hardening Pharaoh’s heart so that he would sin and not set the Israelites free from their slavery. He also mentioned the fact that Arminians must have agreed with: that the crucifixion of Christ was predestined by God, yet involved sinful actions on the part of many. Edwards concluded this section saying that “it is certain and demonstrable, from the holy Scriptures, as well as the nature of things, and the principles of Arminians, that God permits sin; and at the same time, so orders things, in his providence, that it certainly and infallible will come to pass, in consequence of his permission” (IV.9.12).

Whitby’s argument notwithstanding, Edwards further insisted that “there is a great difference” between arguing that God is the fountain and efficient cause of sin on the one hand, or arguing that God is the permitter of sin on the other. Referring back to a previous example, the sun can be considered the fountain and efficient cause of heat and light, yet it cannot be thought of as the fountain and efficient cause of cold and darkness, although the withdrawal of the sun certainly leads to these effects. Like the withdrawal

of the sun *occasions* cold and darkness, so too the withdrawal of God's grace leads to or occasions sin. In no sense, however, can God be considered the actual fount or "author" of sin in the typical usage of the term (IV.9.14).

In an argument applying more to James than Upham, Edwards argued for the propriety of God's sovereignty over all events in the moral world. The "supreme and absolute Governor of the universe" has the right and obligation to order "all important events" within the purview of his kingdom. Certainly "the moral actions of intelligent creatures" are included in this purview (IV.9.15).

Further, Edwards argued, the events of the moral world will be ordered by something, either by design and wisdom or contingency and chance. Arguing on purely pragmatic grounds, Edwards asked, "is it not better, that the good and evil which happens in God's world, should be ordered, regulated, bounded and determined by the good pleasure of an infinitely wise Being...then to leave these things to fall out by chance, and to be determined by those causes which have no understanding or aim?" Edwards thought that the answer to this question was "doubtless," although James would have disagreed. For Edwards, an orderly universe was a comfort. For James, an orderly universe was a graceless universe (IV.9.16).

Still, Edwards thought that it far superior to leave the government of the universe to Wisdom, than to "blind and unmeaning causes." This latter arrangement would fall far short of the "liberty" which the Arminian divines so earnestly sought. On the other hand, God's government of the world leaves room for "real liberty," i.e., the ability to do as one pleases, and in this sense liberty and necessity agree (IV.9.17).

Edwards reminded his Arminian readers that God may permit morally evil things to happen so that he may bring about good events. The selling of Joseph into slavery and the crucifixion of Christ were two of his Scriptural examples on this point.

Arguing that “God may hate a thing as it is in itself” and yet ordain that good may flow out of that thing, Edwards challenged his readers: “I believe, there is no person of good understanding, who will venture to say, he is certain that it is impossible it should be best, taking in the whole compass and extent of existence, and all consequences in the endless series of events, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world” (IV.9.20). If not, Edwards thought it entirely reasonable to suppose that the distinction between the “things which God thinks best should be, considering all circumstances and consequences,” and “those things which he loves, and are agreeable to his nature.” That is, that God can love holiness and hate sin, yet still permit sinful things to happen because the best possible results will follow that permission. Interestingly, here too, James thought otherwise, and felt himself competent to judge whether it was best for certain events to happen or not (in “Dilemma of Determinism;” IV.9.21).

Sin’s First Entrance Into the World

These considerations were relevant to the perplexing question of “sin’s first entrance into the world.” If God had created Adam in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, how did Adam fall into sin? Arminians could argue that the Calvinist notion of necessity meant that God was the author of that first sin. Edwards reiterated his previous discussion regarding God’s “permitting” sin rather than causing it: God withheld his “divine influence” from Adam and he, in his creaturely imperfection, sinned.

Yet, the Arminian might object, why should not have God gone all the way and simply made Adam sinful to begin with? To this Edwards replied, first, that it was fitting that sin should enter into the world through the “imperfection which properly belongs to the creature” in order to avoid the appearance that God was actually “the efficient or fountain” of that evil. As always, God’s glory is key. Second, as he was wont to do, Edwards argued again that Arminian principles do not solve the theological paradoxes of the Christian faith. The Arminian explanation for sin’s first entrance into the world, based upon self-determination and contingency is incoherent: self-determination would argue that Adam’s first sin was caused by a preceding act of sin. To say that the sinful volition of Adam came from nothing is not only incoherent, but also does not solve the culpability issue: how could God hold Adam accountable for a sin which he had nothing to do, a sin which arose from pure chance?

Calvinism and God’s Moral Character

At this stage in Freedom, Edwards summarized what he thought he had accomplished so far, with a particular focus on the question of God’s sincerity in issuing commands to his subjects:

The things which have been already observed, may be sufficient to answer most of the objections, and silence the great exclamations of Arminians against the Calvinists, from the supposed inconsistency of Calvinistic principles with the moral perfections of God, as exercised in his government of mankind. The consistence of such a doctrine of necessity as has been maintained, with the fitness and reasonableness of God’s commands, promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments, has been particularly considered: the cavils of our

opponents, as though our doctrine of necessity made God the author of sin, have been answered; and also their objection against these principles, as inconsistent with God's sincerity, in his counsels, invitations and persuasions, has been already obviated, in what has been observed, respecting the consistence of what Calvinists suppose concerning the *secret* and *revealed* will of God: by that it appears, there is no repugnance in supposing it may be the secret will of God, that his ordination and permission of events should be such that it shall be a certain consequence, that a thing never will come to pass; which yet it is man's duty to do, and so God's *perceptive* will, that he should do... (IV.11.1)

Arminians would accuse Calvinists of impugning God's character by arguing that God's decree (foreordaining whatsoever comes to pass) is inconsistent with his issuing commands: why would God tell a person not to steal if he knew that that person would steal regardless? The Arminian objection falls because Arminians believe in God's foreknowledge of all events. By implication, Arminian theology also affirms that God knows beforehand that certain commands will be disobeyed and ignored, yet he continues to issue the command nonetheless.

Given the Arminian belief that moral agency requires a self-determined will free from all necessity, Edwards argued that it was actually the Arminians that impugned God's character. If a moral act must be free from all necessity, then God's actions must be free from all necessity. But this supposition undermines all attempts to rationally prove the "moral perfections of God." If Arminian assumptions prevail it is impossible to prove "that God certainly will in any one instance do that which is just and holy"

(IV.11.3). Here Edwards appears to endorse a classic approach to apologetics, assuming that reason can be used to demonstrate certain religious truths.

Edwards also accused Arminians of simply begging the question in their argumentation. Arminians in their argumentation simply *assume* that their definition of freedom is valid and that people cannot be subject to command or persuasion. From this starting point, the Arminians then “heap up scriptures containing commands, counsels, calls, warnings...” etc., assuming that this proves the Calvinists are in error. Yet, “none denies, that there are commands...” in the Scripture. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Arminians to “first make manifest the things in question [i.e., the nature of true freedom, etc.], which they suppose and take for granted, and shew them to be consistent with themselves, and produce clear evidence of their truth...” (IV.11.4). (As we will see in the case of Upham and James, there really is not much argumentation in support of the Arminian notions, just assertion.) Further, Edwards reiterated, it is the Arminian scheme that ultimately contradicts the use of commands, motives and persuasions (IV.11.5).

The Tendency to Atheism and Licentiousness

The next objection against Calvinism that Edwards confronted was that Calvinistic necessity tended toward “atheism and licentiousness.” Typical of his style, Edwards again turned the tables on the Arminians. For one, the philosophers which had been associated with Calvinism and Arminianism told a telling story. The Stoics, which were compared by Arminians to the Calvinists, were “the greatest theists,” while Epicurus was both an atheist and “the greatest maintainer of contingency” (IV.12.1).

It is only the doctrine of necessity that allows for a rational proof of God’s existence. The doctrine of contingency undermines this proof since it implies that things

come to pass for no reason whatsoever. Edwards concluded that "...it is the doctrine of the Arminians, and not of the Calvinists, that is justly charged with a tendency to atheism; it being built on a foundation that is the utter subversion of every demonstrative argument for the proof of the deity; as has been shewn..." (IV.12.2).

And, despite the objection that Calvinism renders all "means and endeavors" vain, it is actually Arminianism that undermines these things because it denies the necessity which these things presuppose, overthrowing "all connection, in every degree, between endeavor and event, means and end" (IV.12.3).

Further, Arminianism leads to licentiousness because it "excuses all evil inclinations, which men find to be natural; because in such inclinations they are not self-determined." If the necessity of evil inclination excuses a moral agent, then even "the vilest acts and practices" will be justified. The stronger the evil inclination, the greater the necessity, the greater the excuse (IV.12.4).

Edwards also thought that practically speaking, it was the Arminian doctrine that actually produced the worse results. Although some abused the Calvinist doctrine, it was Arminianism that produced "...vice, profaneness, luxury and wickedness of all sorts, and a contempt of all religion, and of every kind of seriousness and strictness of conversation..." He thought that these effects could be seen in "our nation in particular." Here Edwards seems to see an overlap with theological Arminianism and the "wisdom of this age," which is consistent with the redundancy of the Enlightenment and Arminianism concerning the freedom of the will. In view of this perceived link between Arminianism and licentiousness, Edwards mocked what he saw as arrogant modern claims that Calvinism needed to be rejected in order to advance virtue (IV.12.5).

Metaphysics and Psychology

Edwards closed Part IV of Freedom of the Will considering the Arminian objection that defenders of Calvinism “...run into nice scholastic distinctions, and abstruse metaphysical subtleties” which are opposed to “common sense.” It is possible that some Arminians would levy the same objection against Freedom of the Will, and Edwards wanted to provide an intelligent defense against this claim.

One challenge to this accusation is its frivolity, i.e., taking exception to the Calvinist defense because of the science to which it is “properly reduced.” Such an objection is equivalent to taking objection to an argument because of the language in which it is delivered. “If the reasoning be good,” Edwards thought, it does not matter what science or what language it belongs to. Further, such an argument is inconsistent since the kind of argumentation employed in Freedom “is no more metaphysical, than those which we use against the Papists, to disprove their doctrine of transubstantiation...,” and is of the sort used to prove “that the rational soul is not corporeal,” and that God exists. In short, Protestant theology depended a great deal upon “metaphysical” reasoning, and Arminians should not take exception to its use when considering the question of the freedom of the will. Metaphysical reasoning also applied to the task of natural theology, and nearly everywhere else. There is “no strict demonstration of anything, excepting mathematical truths, but by metaphysics. We can have no proof, that is properly demonstrative, of any one proposition, relating to the being and nature of God, his creation of the world, the dependence of all things on him, the nature of bodies or spirits, the nature of our own souls, or any of the great truths of morality and natural religion, but what is metaphysical” (IV.13.2). Edwards therefore

pleaded that his arguments be considered and not written off simply because they are deemed “metaphysical.”

Further, the arguments in Freedom were not abstruse or based upon strange distinctions. In a passage that serves as a nice summary of Edwards’ main points, he attempted to show that his basic arguments had really been quite simple:

There is no high degree of refinement and abstruse speculation, in determining, that a thing is not before it is, and so can’t be the cause of itself; or that the first act of free choice, has not another act of free choice going before that, to excite or direct it; or in determining, that no choice is made, while the mind remains in a state of absolute indifference; that preference and equilibrium never coexist; and that therefore no choice is made in a state of liberty, consisting in indifference: and that so far as the will is determined by motives, exhibited and operating previous to the act of will, so far it is not determined by the act of the will itself; that nothing can begin to be, which before was not, without a cause, or some antecedent ground or reason, why it then begins to be; that effects depend on their causes, and are connected with them; that virtue is not the worse, nor sin the better, for the strength of inclination, with which it is practiced, and the difficulty which thence arises of doing otherwise; that when it is already infallibly known, that a thing will be, it is not a thing contingent whether it will ever be or no; or that it can be truly said, notwithstanding, that it is not necessary it should be, but it either may be, or may not be. And the like might be observed of many other things which belong to the foregoing reasoning. (IV.13.3)

Crucially, it is also unhelpful to stubbornly reject the reasoning such as that found in Freedom of the Will because it contradicts some purportedly “natural sense of the mind.” People who argue like this simply refuse to engage argumentation because they believe they already know that Calvinistic necessity is simply not possible. In this case, the difficulty is “nothing but a mere prejudice.” Edwards challenged this type of person to confront his arguments rationally. In the footnote associated with this paragraph, Edwards took exception to the frequent use of the term “experience” to validate Arminian intuitions. This quote, relegated to a footnote, may well have been the core of a refutation of the American mental philosophy tradition:

A person can experience only what passes in his own mind. But yet, as we may well suppose, that all men have the same human faculties; so a man may well argue from his own experience to that of others, in things that shew the nature of those faculties, and the manner of their operation. But then one has as good right to allege his experience, as another. *As to my own experience*, I find, that in innumerable things I can do as I will; that the motions of my body, in many respects, instantaneously follow the acts of my will concerning those motions; and that my will has some command of my thoughts; and that the acts of the will are my own, i.e., that they are acts of my will, the volitions of my own mind; or in other words, that what I will, I will. Which, I presume, is the sum of what others experience in this affair. *But as to my finding by experience*, that my will is originally determined by itself; or that my will first choosing what volition there shall be, the chosen volition accordingly follows; and that this is the first rise of the determination of my will in any affair; or that any volition arises in my mind

contingently; I declare, I know nothing in myself, by experience, of this nature; and nothing that ever I experienced, carries the least appearance or shadow of any such thing.” (IV.13.4, italics mine)

Edwards’ final paragraph in Part IV is a defense of the idea that the Arminian notion of moral agency is actually the position positing abstruse and unintelligible metaphysical notions which have no correspondence with common sense or reality. “Metaphysical” notions such as “self-determination” and “sovereignty of the will,” are incoherent, and the terms such as “necessary,” ‘contingency,’ ‘action,’ ‘agency,’ etc.” are used in a way “quite diverse from their meaning as used in common speech.” In so doing, Edwards argued that there *is* a “common” belief system that can be known, and that Arminians contradict that belief system (IV.13.7).

A Sectarian Conclusion to a Nonsectarian Argument

It is curious after such an earnest attempt to argue rationally with his opponents, that Edwards began the conclusion to Freedom of the will on a note of skepticism. He thought it “not unlikely” that those propagating “the modern fashionable divinity” would simply revitalize the old arguments against necessity, and ignore the substance of Edwards’ arguments. Prophetically, Edwards proclaimed that those reading his book: “may probably renew the usual exclamations, with additional vehemence and contempt, about the ‘fate’ of the heathen, ‘Hobbes’ necessity,’ and ‘making men mere machines’; accumulating the terrible epithets of ‘fatal,’ ‘unfrustrable,’ ‘inevitable,’ ‘irresistible,’ etc. and it may be, with the addition of ‘horrid’ and ‘blasphemous’; and perhaps much skill may be used to set forth things which have been said, in colors which shall be shocking to the imaginations, and moving to the passions of those who have either too little capacity,

or too much confidence of the opinions they have imbibed, and contempt of the contrary, to try the matter by any serious or circumspect examination.” Indeed, in the footnote to this paragraph, Edwards indicates that he thought that the tone of Arminian philosophers blurred the line “between *argument* and *contempt*.” Clearly, Edwards was not convinced that Arminians would be willing to engage him on rational grounds (Conclusion.1).

The question of the freedom of the will was, in Edwards mind, the lynchpin upon which all disagreements between Calvinists and Arminians hung. Edwards optimistically believed that his arguments had not only refuted the Arminian notion of freedom, but that the “contrary doctrines” had been “demonstratively confirmed.” Therefore, “God’s moral government over mankind...is not inconsistent with a determining disposal of all events, of every kind, throughout the universe...” This “*universal, determining providence*” does not undermine moral agency because it regulates human volition through a moral rather than a natural necessity. Indeed, Edwards repeats his argument that moral agency and the use of commands only makes sense in such a divinely determined system. Here Edwards extends his arguments, attempting to demonstrate from reason God’s providential control of all things. For the sake of this dissertation, the most significant thing about this argument is that Edwards seemed to think it possible that a chief doctrine of Calvinism could be proved through a nonsectarian method, i.e., reason (Conclusion.2).

Edwards arguments supported the traditional “...Calvinistic doctrine of the *total depravity and corruption of man’s nature*, whereby his heart is wholly under the power of sin, and he is utterly unable, without the interposition of sovereign grace, savingly to love God, believe in Christ, or do anything that is truly good and acceptable in God’s

sight.” The Arminians thought that such an inability robbed humans of the indifference and self-determination requisite to moral agency, and that God would be unjust in such a system to demand of sinners what they cannot do. Yet, Edwards reiterated the dual points that, first, the necessity that binds the sinner is a moral necessity, which is entirely consistent with culpability, and second, that indifference and self-determination are illogical concepts which can have no real existence. The Calvinistic doctrine therefore stands.

The Calvinist doctrine “*irresistible*” and “*efficacious grace*,” i.e., the idea that God of his own initiative changes the sinner’s heart so that belief is possible, is also vindicated. The Arminians thought that this doctrine undermined morality because it posited a source of virtue outside of the self, i.e., “the good which is wrought, would not be *our* virtue, but rather *God’s* virtue...” Yet, given Edwards’ refutation of self-determination and his related support of the idea that virtue must have its source outside of the will itself, Edwards rejected these Arminian notions. Indeed, given his previous “proof” of universal causality, and of God’s provident control over all events, it follows that the volitions of human beings must also fall under this control, either through God’s efficiency or his permission. Since all allow that “virtuous volitions” are attended by “some positive influence” from God, it follows “that God’s assistance or influence, must be determining and decisive, or must be attended with a moral necessity of the event.” Whether Edwards is successful here in proving the Calvinist doctrine of irresistible grace is irrelevant. It is clear, however, that he thought doctrine to be of great importance, and, in seeming contradiction to his own aforementioned doctrine of total depravity (which held that people are unable to believe truth unless God changes their heart), Edwards

argued as if he believed that rational argument could lead to belief (Conclusion.4). The importance here is that Edwards participated in the development of the nonsectarian moral culture in American colleges, by inviting debate on solely rational rather than creedal lines.

Edwards also thought his arguments served as a proof for both the decree of God, i.e., the idea that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass, and for the doctrine of election, i.e., that God chooses from eternity past which people he will regenerate and save. The Arminian objection against these doctrines was that the necessity of election undermines moral agency, rewards and punishments, the use of commands and persuasions, etc. Assuming he had proved God's providence, he extrapolated that God's disposing of all events must be by design, which is the same as decree. Since this decree must be eternal, and, as previously proved, results in the regeneration of certain hearts, we can infer that God had from all eternity chosen beforehand whom he would regenerate (Conclusion.5).

The scope of the atoning sacrifice of Christ is likewise implicated in these things. For whom did Christ die? Given God's election of certain saints to be saved, it follows that Christ's death must have been to this end. That is, Christ's death must have been consistent with God's overall goals of redemption: to save the elect from sin. Therefore, Christ died for the elect only.

The doctrine of the necessary "*perseverance* of saints," i.e., that the elect will not only infallibly come to faith through efficacious grace, but will infallible *remain* in faith, is likewise proved. Arminians argued that a self-determined will must not only initiate the Christian life, but must also complete it. Therefore the idea that God would oversee

the beginning and end was repugnant to Arminian theology. Yet, since Edwards had debunked the notion of self-determination, so too must the Arminian objection to perseverance be negated (Conclusion.7).

Further, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is consistent with the doctrines of efficacious grace and absolute election. Efficacious grace does not depend upon the self-determined will of the sinner, but is given in time to all those whom God elected. Since people are elected to be saved from all eternity, it follows that those whom God regenerates, he will also sustain until the end (Conclusion.8)

Edwards hoped to leave his proof of Calvinism in the hands of “fair and impartial reader[s],” another affirmation that seemed to be at tension with his own doctrine of total depravity. That is, if human beings are in bondage to sin, will they really be “fair and impartial” when considering arguments that contradict that sin? Edwards proceeded as if he believed Enlightened discourse could achieve the purposes of God (Conclusion.9). He also thought that Arminian arguments had unfairly “injured” the reputations of “first Reformers.” Edwards’ disgust with the prejudices of Arminian rhetoric is clear at this point. The thought that men as capable and godly as the great Reformers would be cast as ignorant fools writing in a dark age was infuriating. Edwards thought the self-portrayal of Arminians, as “gentlemen possessed of that noble and generous freedom of thought,” and of the contemporary milieu as an “age of light and inquiry,” were deeply misleading. He conceded that many of these people were indeed “men of great abilities” who had made contributions to philosophy and to the church. Still, given his refutation of Arminian errors, Edwards also thought that Arminian arrogance concerning human freedom was unfounded. Indeed, “...their differing from their fathers with such

magisterial assurance, in these points of divinity, must be owing to some other cause than superior wisdom” (Conclusion.9).

Edwards therefore also challenged his readers to consider whether the advance of Arminian opinion in Great Britain (“our nation”) and elsewhere was really the advance in understanding as it had often been portrayed, or if “it may be owing to some worse cause.” Given Edwards’ usage of terms such as “sovereign” to apply to the Arminian view of human nature, perhaps Edwards thought that this “worse cause” may have been a hubristic elevation of human nature and a corresponding diminution in the status afforded to the true sovereign of the universe, God. (Conclusion.10). Indeed, some Arminians held so tenaciously to their beliefs in self-determination and contingency, and their rejection of necessity, that they explicitly held this as an *a priori* assumption by which they interpreted the Scripture. Any place in Scripture apparently teaching Calvinist doctrines, they argued, must be interpreted counter to its obvious sense. Others, seemingly more humble, thought Calvinist doctrines endangered God’s reputation. Still, Edwards argued, it is best to allow God to teach us through the scripture, than to arrogantly assume that we know best before we even begin (Conclusion.11).

Given his arguments against Arminian divinity, Edwards was glad that the Scriptures did not teach Arminianism because *that* would be most repugnant to reason. “Indeed, it is a glorious argument of the divinity of the holy Scriptures, that they teach such doctrines, which in one age and another, through the blindness of men’s minds, and strong prejudices of their hearts, are rejected, as most absurd and unreasonable, by the wise and great men of the world; which yet, when they are most carefully and strictly examined, appear to be exactly agreeable to the most demonstrable, certain, and natural

dictates of reason” (Conclusion.12). Edwards ended Freedom of the Will with a quote from 1 Corinthians, reinforcing the main thrust of Puritan psychology: that, above all, God is to be glorified, and humanity humbled:

‘But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen: yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence.’ Amen. (Conclusion.12)

Summary and Conclusion

Edwards began the last part of Freedom of the Will attempting to explain *why* the Arminians would be tempted to believe in their incoherent tenets. The first Arminian premise Edwards considered was that the virtue of acts of will depends upon the cause of these acts of will rather than the nature of these acts. For the Arminian, only a self-determined act was virtuous. As one might expect, Edwards used to infinite regress argument to show that this was an incoherent notion. If the virtue of an act is determined by a previous act of will, then we must determine the virtue of the act determining this preceding act, and so on. Virtue is therefore “banish[ed] from the world” in the Arminian universe (IV.1.3). Edwards speculated that the Arminians may have arrived at this conclusion by confusing terms with a situation in which the virtue of an act *is* determined by its cause: in the determination of bodily movements.

Edwards also considered the Arminian’s “metaphysical notion of agency and action” ponderous, and offered an explanation for this belief. In essence, the Arminian notion of agency was that truly virtuous action must never be an effect; it must never be

“passive” but must instead be “active.” Further, passivity and activity were considered by some Arminians to be contradictory terms. Edwards showed that this premise was false: it is possible for a volition to be an effect of one thing, and yet a cause of something else. Guessing what might have led the Arminians to such metaphysical notions, Edwards once again turned to the confounding of inward and outward actions. Just as outward actions are determined by the will, so too, the Arminians may have erroneously concluded, must the actions of the will be determined by the will. It should be noted that this premise also seemed to characterize the thinking of Upham and James. That a truly virtuous action must be entirely “original” and “underived.”

The Arminian belief in the incompatibility of necessity and praise and blame was also in need of explanation. Edwards offered five reasons that Arminians fell into this error. One of these reasons is that Arminians may have learned to associate terms dealing with natural necessity with moral necessity. For example, a situation may be “unavoidable” in a natural sense even though there was a will to the contrary. When the term unavoidable is used to describe the will, the idea of contrary will is improperly carried over.

Arminians often accused the Calvinist position on necessity and morality to be contrary to common sense. In the next section of Freedom of the Will, Edwards dismantled this argument and showed that it actually was the Arminian notion of moral agency that contradicted common sense. In brief, “common” people believe that actions which flow from evil (or good) inclinations are evil (or good). Indeed, the stronger the evil inclination, the more evil the action. Since the Arminian notion of moral agency teaches that strong inclinations actually eradicate moral responsibility, it is clearly

Arminianism that contradicts common sense, and Calvinism which has common sense on its side. Given the nineteenth-century rise of a common sense approach to mental philosophy in America, Edwards' comments on this point are particularly relevant. To question the validity of claims to common sense would be to question the very foundations for the psychological systems of early nineteenth century American textbook writers like Thomas Upham.

The use of fatalistic argumentation also falls apart. Some Arminians would argue that if everything is predestined, and the outcome is already certain, it makes no sense to use means in order to obtain moral ends. But, contrary to Arminian suppositions, it is only a system that allows for necessary connections between means and ends that actually supports the use of means. In the Arminian system, means can only serve to throw the will out of indifference or undermine the self-determination of the will. Likewise, Arminians are out of bounds by arguing that necessity makes people machines. The dignity of souls endowed with will and intellect far surpasses machines, Edwards countered. Yet the Arminian notion of moral agency makes humans worse than machines, which, unlike their contingent and self-determined counterparts, are guided by purpose and understanding.

The attempt to dismiss Calvinism by associating Calvin and Hobbes was also inconsistent and theologically uninformed. Edwards did not deny that both Calvinism and Hobbes embraced necessity. Yet, it was common practice in Edwards' day to follow the doctrine of common grace, that truth could be known by Christian and non-Christian alike. The Arminians employed the principle, and saw pagan advocacy of their doctrines as confirmation of their doctrines. Why the similarity between Hobbes and Calvinism on

the point of necessity was supposed to be damning Edwards did not know, particularly given the fact that the Arminians agreed with Hobbes on more points than did the Calvinists. Again, Edwards seemed to be accusing the Arminians of deception and a lack of genuineness in their argumentation.

Just as Arminians believed that necessity rendered human action machine-like, undermining the dignity and virtue of human actions, so too did some Arminians argue that God's virtue and excellence would likewise be undermined if his actions were necessary. To this Edwards replied that it is certainly no disadvantage to God that his actions are always wise and virtuous, and that it would be greatly disadvantageous if his actions were somehow random. Further, Arminians themselves were often inconsistent in their argumentation here, often representing God as being necessarily virtuous.

The Arminian objection that Calvinism makes God the "author of sin" (and therefore absolves people of their sins) was also problematic on a number of grounds. Again Edwards called Arminian theologians to account for their inconsistencies, and once again challenged the usefulness of "foreknowledge" to avoid theological difficulties. Certainly a sure foreknowledge of future sins makes God just as "guilty" as the full decree that sinful things should occur. Still, Edwards rejected the idea that God is the author of sin if that meant that God is the efficient cause of sin. But he fully embraced the idea that God had ordained certain sins to take place for good purposes, and that the withdrawal of God's grace is the occasion but not the fountain of these sins. Edwards did not deny that these assertions were difficult, but also thought it far better that the evil in the world is under the control of a purposive and benevolent deity than be

purposeless and wanton. Edwards also used these principles to explain “sin’s first entrance into the world.”

Contrary to Arminian accusations that Calvinism tends toward atheism and licentiousness, Edwards pulled the various strands of his argumentation to argue just the opposite: Arminianism undermines belief in God and reinforces human sinfulness. For example, contingency, which posits that things come about for no reason, undermines rational proofs for God’s existence. Arminianism also excuses evil inclinations because these rob the soul of the indifference requisite for moral agency. Finally, the Arminian argument was further challenged by the fact that England, which Edwards saw as having widely embraced Arminianism, had the grossest cases of licentiousness.

Edwards closed Part IV of Freedom of the Will challenging the Arminian contention that the Calvinist position on the will was “abstruse” and overly “metaphysical.” Besides the fact that metaphysical inquiry is entirely appropriate and unavoidable in theological inquiry, Edwards made the case that his arguments were actually quite simple—arguing, for example, that the contention that “the first act of free choice, has not another act of free choice going before that...” is not very complicated. Arminian notions of self-determination, necessity, contingency, etc., however, were actually quite convoluted. In this context Edwards also problematized the entire introspective method to arriving at purportedly “universal” psychological knowledge: Edwards denied ever having the experiences of contingency and self-determination which the Arminians claimed to be universal. The critique that Calvinism is “metaphysical” allowed Arminians to continue in their prejudice without actually considering arguments outside of their camp.

Edwards began the extended Conclusion to Freedom of the Will continuing in his skepticism and ambivalence about his own project: he did not think that Arminians would actually carefully consider his arguments, but would rather recapitulate the old arguments with great stridency. Edwards' ambivalence is a telling critique of the problems associated with the nonsectarian and "enlightened" approach to truth which denies the centrality of moral community, and propagates the mythology of the individual as an autonomous truth-seeker. His ambivalence is also an instance of the tensions between his own theology (which affirmed that only God can change the heart) and his leanings toward enlightenment. Edwards nevertheless thought that he had demonstrated the truth of Calvinism, and offered a point-by-point demonstration of the main tenets of Calvinism vis-à-vis Arminianism (i.e., the "five points of Calvinism"). Ending Freedom of the Will on a note similar to that of William Ames, Edwards rejoiced that God reveals his magnificent truth to the simple, and keeps it from the wise. Edwards thereby manifested his complex understanding of reason in the process of persuasion. Although he thought that truth could be demonstrated through reason he did not believe that truth so demonstrated could be embraced without God's help. All efficiency to do good was, after all, God's alone.

A LOSS OF WILL:
“ARMINIANISM,” NONSECTARIANISM, AND THE EROSION OF AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGY’S MORAL PROJECT, 1636-1890

VOLUME II OF II

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PART III: APPLICATION

"So that let Arminians turn which way they please with their notion of liberty, consisting in the will's determining its own acts, their notion destroys itself."

Jonathan Edwards, *The Freedom of the Will*, (II.5.4)

INTRODUCTION TO PART III

The Third Part of the Dissertation “Application” gets its name after the final part of the Puritan jeremiad in which the “doctrine” is fleshed out in the real world. Historical hindsight allows us to take “application” to another level since we are granted a knowledge of the development of American psychology that Edwards did not have. There are two “uses” to Edwards’ doctrine. The first centers on Thomas Upham’s Mental Philosophy, which serves as a representation of the Americanization of Enlightenment mental philosophy. The second use focuses on William James’s Principles of Psychology, the seminal work of the New Psychology.

USE I:

THOMAS C. UPHAM'S MENTAL PHILOSOPHY

“...[Man] possesses, as an attribute of his own nature, an amount of real efficiency suited to the limited, sphere which Providence has allotted him....There is no *accountable* existence without power...”

Thomas C. Upham, *Mental Philosophy*, (I.274).

INTRODUCTION TO USE I

As noted above (see section on the selection of texts), Enlightenment thinking began to infiltrate American colleges during the eighteenth century, particularly the latter half of that century. Although educators made use of the original European texts, particularly of Reid and Stewart, it wasn't until 1827 that an original American appropriation was published for use in colleges. The work was entitled Elements of Intellectual Philosophy, and the author was Thomas Cogswell Upham (Fuchs, 2000a; Fuchs, 2000b). As Fuchs has noted, this text set a precedent for the shape and flavor of the study of psychology in America that continues to the present day (e.g., in terms of its eclecticism, its being a summary and interpretation of a wide variety of sources, its evangelistic appeals in favor of the scientific method, etc.).

For the next 42 years, Upham would continue to write and revise his psychology. Five years after the publication of Elements, Upham published the third edition of his text, this time changing the title to Elements of Mental Philosophy. The title reflected the fact that Upham was now considering more than the intellect, incorporating sustained reflection on “the sensibilities.” Upham added the third “department” of the will in 1834, which served as the final part of a three-volume edition of his mental philosophy. These three departments of the mind were joined in a single volume in his 1861 abridged edition (Fuchs, 2000b, p. 5-7). This abridgement evidently was widely adopted, being reprinted [according to Worldcat] in 1863, 1867, 1868, 1871, 1873, 1875, 1876, 1879, 1880, 1882, 1883, and 1889. Based upon statistics such as these both Fuchs (2000b) and Salter (1986) have argued that Upham's prototypical psychology textbook was extremely

successful. Salter (1986) estimated that “Upham’s Mental Philosophy went through an astounding fifty-seven editions (1826-1899),” and that he was “the prototype mental philosopher of the nineteenth century” (p. 12). Although it would be more appropriate to consider these “editions” as mostly reprints, this conclusion seems quite reasonable. Indeed, Salter may have *underestimated* Upham’s popularity, stating that “Mental Philosophy was possibly as popular as any [textbook] from 1830 to 1860” (p. 18). Given the popularity of his abridgement in the 1860s, 70s, and 80s, Upham’s popularity appears to have been sustained well into the postbellum years as well.

In terms of selecting a text for analysis, I have chosen what appears to be the very last revision of the entire full-length version of Mental Philosophy. Upham’s (1869) preface, written two and one-half years before his death (Preface dated September, 1869, Upham died April 2, 1972), stated, “...desirous of rendering [the book] as perfect as possible, I have recently subjected it to re-examination and revision, and accordingly it appears now in a somewhat new form, in some respects condensed and in others enlarged, and with the results of the author’s latest inquiries and emendations” (p. v). This full-length treatment also allows for a more extensive treatment of the topic of the will as compared to that given in the abridged version of 1861. Although Upham’s (1834) stand-alone book on the will would provide a more extensive foundation for Upham’s philosophical thinking of the will, I have chosen Mental Philosophy because a *crucial* part of my analysis is the relationship which the will was thought to have to the other “faculties” of the soul. Even the mere number of pages devoted to each topic is important in this regard.

A brief note is in order concerning Upham's religious orientation. As noted previously, Upham was trained at the Calvinist Andover Theological Seminary, graduating in 1821. He took the professorship of mental and moral philosophy at Bowdoin College in 1825, and remained in that job for his entire career. During his tenure at Bowdoin, Upham continued to evolve spiritually. Perhaps the most meaningful event in Upham's spiritual life was his experience of "entire sanctification" under Phoebe Palmer, the leading exponent of a "new" and "updated" version of Methodist perfectionism for the early nineteenth century American scene (Noll, 2002). Bundy (1998) has noted that the spirituality that Upham learned from Palmer "had two distinct foci" (p. 29). The first of these was an emphasis on "personal holiness" and the second on "social holiness." Both of these emphases are evident in Upham's (1869) Mental Philosophy. Most important for our purposes is the emphasis on personal holiness. Although Upham was not a systematic theologian (Salter, 1986), and although his theological views are better expressed in other works (Bundy, 1998), it is also true that Upham does make fairly clear theological assertions in his Mental Philosophy. What becomes evident, even in Mental Philosophy, is that Upham's theology is not the conservative Calvinism of Edwards and Ames. In other writings Upham argued for the perfectibility of the person through the freedom of the will (Bundy, 1998), reflecting Methodist (and Arminian) roots rather than old-style Calvinism, which steadfastly denied that perfectibility was possible in this life. This same emphasis on freedom of the will is evident in Mental Philosophy. Still, we find vestiges of Upham's Calvinistic background in Mental Philosophy. The most obvious vestige is Upham's insistence that the will is subject to law, a proposition he defends by quoting Edwards.²¹ Upham's theological

²¹ Vernon Howard (1964) portrays Upham therefore as a "half-way house" between the determinism of

ambiguity in Mental Philosophy may very well be an example of the nonsectarian impulse described above, while Upham's *lack* of ambiguity concerning the autonomy of the will is, I think, a clear example of the "Arminian impulse" that characterized nineteenth-century American psychologists, including William James.

Edwards and the indeterminism of James. Although Howard's dissertation deserves more careful attention than I can give it here, I am not quite comfortable with this thesis because James, as I will argue below, arguably took determinism more seriously than Upham. Howard focuses his analysis of James on his essay "the Dilemma of Determinism," and on James' analysis of effort in Principles of Psychology. Howard's analysis of these texts is accurate, I think, but it ignores other parts of James's writings that stress the idea that the vast majority of our voluntary actions are subject to determinism.

CHAPTER VII

ARMINIAN INTUITIONS

This chapter is a commentary and analysis of the first volume of Upham's (1869) Mental Philosophy. This volume dealt with "the faculty of the intellect," while the second volume dealt with the faculties of the sensibilities and the will. As one might expect, volume one had little to do *explicitly* with the topic of the will. Nevertheless, the volume is full of considerations relevant to the "Arminianization" and eventual loss of will in American psychology. In particular, deterministic processes are a concern to Upham. In a manner that anticipates similar maneuvers by William James, Upham de-claws these potentially threatening considerations, preserving room for Arminian freedom. For example, Upham shows a reticence to embrace the newly emerging science of physiology because of its mechanistic implications. The classification scheme that Upham offers (intellect, sensibilities, will) frees the will from the encroachment of the motive powers. Upham makes a strong distinction between will (which can be "free") and habit (which is a product of deterministic processes), and sees the need to limit the sphere of habit in order to avoid wresting too much control from the will. The powers of association are also considered from an Arminian perspective. Finally, Upham's nonsectarian intuitions reveal that human beings possess a degree of God-given "power" or "efficiency" which makes them responsible moral agents.

Preliminaries

Upham's preface places him squarely within the American psychological tradition. Claiming to have produced a "just and impartial account" of mental philosophy which utilizes the insights but depends upon none of the "various philosophical sects," Upham reveals himself to be a participant in enlightenment and nonsectarian moral culture. Once characteristic of this nonsectarianism is the fact that his approach is "eclectic in its character." Further, in a move that Edwards would have found problematic, Upham rejected the "bold conjecture" of deduction and reason in favor of "the subjective test of my own mental experience and operations." Instead of serving any particular *religious* sect, Upham thought his work would be "accordant...with the principles and interests of correct morals and religion." In this light, Upham added piously that he hoped that his endeavors had been blessed with God's "assistance" (I.iv).

Upham further mentioned that his work proceeded "...upon the basis of a threefold division of the mind, viz., the INTELLECT, the SENSIBILITIES, and the WILL." He admitted that this division had ...not generally been made prominent in philosophical writers..." Yet the division was to Upham "...a fundamental one, without which there is no adequate foundation for morals, aesthetics, or religion." Indeed, as we shall see, this division of the mental faculties was inspired directly by the Arminian impulse that Edwards had tried to refute.

Induction did not mean disorder. Far from it. Upham's claim that "...the reader will find the whole subject open[s] itself connectedly and symmetrically, and in such a manner as to present, in its completed outline, not merely a disjointed congeries of philosophical facts, but the regularity and beauty of a philosophical system" (I.iv-v) was

right on the mark. The psychology of Upham is nothing if not “symmetrical” and orderly: a symmetry and order borne perhaps more in the sensibilities of nineteenth century America than in any actual structure inherent to the human mind.

Upham thought he was making a unique contribution and not merely recapitulating other men’s arguments. Although he claimed no originality in “the general division of the Sensibilities is into the Natural or Pathematic and Moral,” he did indicate that his views on conscience were original and he hoped that “...some of the difficulties which have hitherto attended it have been removed, and that the whole subject is placed, to some extent, in a consistent and satisfactory light” (I.v). In other areas as well, Upham thought he was advancing knowledge, “...particularly in the classification of the Emotions and the Desires, and their relation to each other, and in some of the doctrines contained in the portion on the Will...” (I.v).

Upham wrote the preface to this edition of Mental Philosophy when he was 70 years old. He had watched his book move “...through successive editions,” and accurately portrayed the situation by declaring that the book had “...been favourably received by the public; perhaps as much so as other philosophical works.” Yet, he notes that the 1869 edition had been subjected to “...re-examination and revision...” and reflected “...the results of the author’s latest inquiries and emendations” (I.v).

Primary Truths

By way of preparation, Upham indicated that “it is often highly important, in the investigation of a department of science, to state, at the commencement of such investigation...what things are to be considered as preliminary and taken for granted, and what are not.” Doing so avoids “...useless disputes...” (I.17). Upham therefore

delineated “primary truths” which he considered foundational to the rest of the book. Primary truths, Upham explained, referring to both Buffier and Stewart, “...are such, and such only, as can neither be proved nor refuted by other propositions of greater perspicuity” (I.18). Primary truths are “elementary,” i.e., cannot be broken down into smaller elements, and “...illuminate the understanding by their own light, and not by a light let in from any other source.” They “...are forced upon us, as it were, by our very constitution” and “...control the convictions of...all mankind...,” Finally, primary truths are “...the natural and necessary revelations and announcements of our mental nature” (I.19) and “...are the propositions into which all reasoning ultimately resolves itself...” (I.20).

The first example of a primary truth is “personal existence.” “The proposition that we exist is a sort of corner-stone to everything else...” and is “...a proposition antecedent to reasoning...” This “truth of nature” is undeniable, for even doubts about personal existence imply that “...there is some one to doubt” (I.20). Without dogmatizing, Upham offered a theory to explain the development of the concept of personal existence (which had to do with inferring self-existence from changes in conscious states.) Showing that he had to deal with issues that Edwards did not, Upham included “personal identity” among the primary truths, which has to do with the continuity and sameness of the mental and bodily self. [In this context, Upham avoids the notion of reification of faculties, arguing that “The soul of man is truly a unit. It is not, like matter, separable into parts” (I.22)]. To illustrate personal identity, Upham discussed “the farmer...who...knows that he is the same person who, twenty years before, entered the forest with an axe on his shoulder, and felled the first tree.” Personal identity is something we simply do not

doubt, and, typically, is something that we "...believe and know, not from the testimony of others or from reasoning, but from the interior and authoritative suggestion of their very nature..." (I.24).

Another primary truth is belief. "Nothing is better known than that there is a certain state of the mind which is expressed by the term BELIEF" (I.25). Like other primary truths, it is impossible to define or describe belief since it is an ultimate constituent of human nature. Although different theories may be offered regarding the nature of belief and its determinants, "the fact that belief arises" was for Upham an "...ultimate...primary law" which "...no more admits of explanation than does the mere feeling itself."

Given some movements within philosophy, one of Upham's main concerns was to buttress the "credibility" of the "intellectual powers." When people challenge the intellectual powers they necessarily, as Stewart pointed out, argue in a circle. Quoting Sir James Mackintosh, "Universal skepticism involves a contradiction in terms. It is a belief that there can be no belief. It is an attempt of the mind to act without its structure, and by other laws than those to which its nature has subjected its operations" (I.26).

Regarding reasoning, Upham said that there were two "...ultimate truths which are at the foundation of all reasoning whatever." First (and along with Edwards in a very Calvinistic vein) is the belief that there can be "no beginning or change of existence without a cause," (I.27) which is a "universally admitted" (I.28) truth. Additionally, the fact of universal causation "...is an exceedingly important one," particularly since "it is susceptible...of a moral and religious application." If we trace the chain of causal events backward, we must finally arrive at "...one self-existent and unchangeable head and

fountain of being.” The chain of causation stops with God “...since He differs from everything else which is the object of thought, in being an existence equally without change and without beginning” (I.29).

Upham also argued that both mind and matter have “...uniform and fixed laws.” By God’s design, human beings learn to believe in the “uniformity and permanency of the laws of nature” (I.29). Since God has designed human beings to develop “...strong faith... in the continuance of the laws of creation...” (I.30), there is strong reason to suppose that these laws apply to both matter and mind. The belief that mind and matter are governed by law is “...a vast foundation of knowledge...,” without which “...the power of reasoning cannot deduce a single general inference...” (I.31). Upham here argues in a vein similar to Edwards, who insisted that universal causality was a foundation for the rational proof of God, and for morality itself. Interestingly, however, and indicative perhaps of the presumptions of enlightened discourse, Upham does not argue that God (or other truths of theology) is a “primary truth” that is assumed but not proved. It is evident in Mental Philosophy, however, that Upham does assume the existence of God throughout.

The Immateriality of the Mind

Upham addressed “...the question of the materiality or immateriality of the soul.” A topic which is “...obviously too important to be altogether dispensed with...” Defining terms, he noted that “the words MATERIAL and IMMATERIAL are relative, being founded on the observation of the presence or of the absence of certain qualities.” We apply the term “material” to objects such as wood and iron in which “...certain qualities, such as extension, divisibility, impenetrability, and colour” inhere. Immaterial

objects lack these qualities. (I.32). Given the importance of the topic, Upham was quite clear about his intentions: "...we are to attempt to show that the soul is not matter, and that thought and feeling are not the result of material organization" (I.33). As we shall see below, Upham thought it necessary to demonstrate that mental processes are "not the result of material organization" because he harbored a most un-Calvinistic notion of "necessity"—the notion that Edwards had attempted to refute. So, while Upham manifested strong Calvinistic sensibilities, his Arminian sensibilities are also evident and even prevalent. One could argue that the entire structure of Upham's psychology is based upon the assumptions that Edwards had tried to refute.

One of Upham's favorite lines of evidence was human language. Language, Upham thought (following other "writings on the philosophy of the mind") provides insight into the conscious experience of people. If a diversity of languages refer to the same conscious phenomenon, he argued, we have evidence that such a phenomenon has a real existence. Upham was "unable to harbour the supposition" that language might not refer to real existences, for that would mean that "...men are deceived and led astray in this opinion" (I.33). Without getting specific, Upham assured his readers that other languages possessed terms correlative to the English terms mind and matter.

Anticipating James, Upham argued that the immateriality of mind was a crucial doctrine because its opposite, "the material doctrine," had insufferable consequences. The idea that "...thought is the result of material organization, and that the soul is not distinct from the body..." was liable to "...no small objection...that it makes the soul truly and literally a machine" (I.35-36). Still, this possibility does not haunt Upham to the extent that it did James, since he does not make continual recourse back to the issue

as James seemed to. Clearly, this had been a concern in European thought since Hobbes, but it had not gained a significant hold in American thought at this point. Nevertheless, Upham perfectly articulates the concerns that would haunt William James.

Since matter "...is known to be subject to a strict and inflexible direction, the origin of which direction is exterior to itself," it follows that:

The material universe is truly an automaton, experiencing through all time the same series of motions, in obedience to some high and authoritative intelligence; and is so entirely subject to fixed laws, that we can express in mathematical formulas not only the state of large bodies, but of a drop of water or of a ray of light; estimating minutely extension and quantity, force, velocity, and resistance.

Apparently making a distinction between being "entirely subject to fixed laws" and being merely subject to them, Upham argued that this entire subjection is not a characteristic of the mind. Although the mind has laws, it "...knows what those laws are..." and is in this different from matter which does not know the laws to which it is subject.

More to the Edwardsean point, however, is that self-determination is itself a law of mind. "Matter yields a blind and unconscious obedience; but the mind is able to exercise a foresight; to place itself in new situations; to subject itself to new influences; to surround itself with new motives..." These special powers of mind are a ground of its freedom, allowing it to "...thus control, in a measure, its own laws." Unlike the mind, matter "...may justly be characterized as a slave," possessing "...no self-determining and self-moving element..." As such, matter is subject to "...an inflexible destiny" (I.36). Therefore, since the laws of mind did not imply a necessity (in the Arminian sense of the word), it was in Upham's mind of utmost important to make a clear distinction between

mind and matter. Although Upham claimed that this is a topic “auxiliary to the main subject” (I.32), it is clear that the unique self-determining powers of the mind were of central importance to Upham, as we shall see below.

To further these views, Upham contended that “...there is an absence of that precise correspondence between the mental and bodily state which would evidently follow from the admission of materialism” (I.36). Upham, who apparently thought that a strict correspondence between mind and matter necessarily implied a godless materialism, granted that the mind is connected with the brain, but he argued that this connection was imperfect. If materialism is true, the destruction of the brain will necessarily be accompanied with the destruction of the soul. Yet, Upham thought (obviously contradicting contemporary psychology), the soul does not appear to be able to be thus destroyed. Upham changes focus a bit during this section to make his point, arguing that since “the body” (as opposed to the brain) is frequently injured without damage to mind, materialism is challenged. Even injury to the brain does not accord with materialist doctrine, which holds that ...the soul does not merely exist and act in connexion with the body, but is identical with it” (I.38).

Referring to the controversy over the localization of function, Upham noted that the mind, if it is identical with brain, “...must be diffused through the whole of that organ, or limited to some particular part.”

Upham, utilizing Ferriar as support, argued that since “...an extensive collection of well-authenticated facts...” testify “...that every part of the brain has been injured, and almost every part absolutely removed, but without permanently affecting the mental powers...” (I.38), the belief that there is a strict identity of mind and brain is challenged.

Upham quoted Ferriar as saying that on the basis of the evidence, "...I am disposed to conclude, that, as no part of the brain appears essentially necessary to the existence of the intellectual faculties... something more than the discernible organization must be requisite to produce the phenomena of thinking" (I.39). That "something more," of course, had to be the immaterial soul.

In addition to this sparse physiological evidence, Upham also engaged in a kind of sentimental argumentation to support the immateriality of mind. The "kindred powers of memory and imagination," for example, was able to transport Upham into "a far-distant place," in which: "I see distinctly before me the trees which shaded me, and the hills where I wandered in my childhood. The same waters flow before me, the same bright sun shines in the heavens; I see around me a multitude of familiar faces, and embrace, with all the vividness of early affections, my old companions. In this excursion of the soul, how many recollections have been revived! How many feelings have been restored!" (I.40). Thus transported by such sublime imagery, Upham simply asked his readers if such a "wonderful power" could be made out of "...a mere mass of matter? I think not." Similarly, Upham thought that the greatest intellectual productions could not be ascribed to automata. He also argued that the materialist understanding of the soul was "inconsistent with future existence" (I.41).

Although "...immortal existence of the soul does not follow with absolute certainty from the mere fact of its immateriality..." it is by that fact "...rendered in some degree probable" (I.41). The opposite doctrine implies the end of the existence of the soul at the death of the body. The moral consequences of this doctrine were therefore again to be rejected. Pulling on the evangelical heartstrings of his audience, he asked,

“where, then, is that immortality, of which the light of nature as well as Revelation assures us?” The “materialist” answer that a new soul would be created was not satisfactory, for that would be “...an *origination* rather than a continual existence.” The new soul would not be the soul of the person to which it belonged. Yet Upham thought his conclusion was “evident” and that “...If the doctrine of immateriality falls, then that of immortality and of a future retribution falls with it” (I.43).

Laws of Belief

As we have seen in William Ames, and will see in the psychology of William James, the psychology of belief figured heavily in discussions of the will. Just as he had asserted in his discussion of primary truths “...that there are in men certain original and authoritative grounds of belief” (I.44), Upham set out to enumerate further some of the controlling principles which guide belief. *Suggestion*, which provides consciousness with “...knowledge of certain elementary notions, such as the abstract conceptions of existence, mind, self-existence or self, personal identity, succession, duration, space, unity, number, power, right, wrong, and some others” (I.44), *consciousness*, which provides “...knowledge of our mental states...” (I.44), *the senses*, which provide knowledge of “...of the external, material world...” (I.45), *memory*, and *human testimony*, all serve as “grounds” as belief. For example, we could not believe in the existence of material objects without the senses, or in the reality of our thoughts apart from consciousness. Upham’s defense of human testimony is revealing on a theological as well as psychological level. He thought that “men are naturally disposed to speak the truth,” and when they lie, they experience a violent “jarring” of “...every honourable sentiment within us” (I.47). Clearly this view of human nature was quite positive,

reflecting the contemporary movement away from the doctrine of original sin such as that maintained by Ames and Edwards. Further, this assertion, and the entire tone of Upham's discussion of belief, tends to view human beings as rational problem solvers rather than driven in certain directions through passion. As such, Upham leaned in an intellectualist direction. To further illustrate this point, his comments on "reasoning" as a ground for belief, illustrate how far from a voluntarist position Upham was. "...Is it," Upham asked, "a fact, that Reasoning necessarily controls our convictions in any case?" Although voluntarists have typically answered this question negatively, Upham seemed to dismiss the question as preposterous: "If we can suppose such a question to be seriously put," Upham argued, "no man has it in his power to refuse obedience to the decisions of reasoning" (I.50).

"Arminian" Classification

Upham followed his intellectualist discussion of belief with a consideration of the "classification" of the mental faculties, another topic directly relevant to evolution of the psychology of will in America. James (and the New Psychology in general) would implicitly accuse the "old" indigenous mental philosophy tradition of committing dual fallacies in its construction of the human mind. The first error was reifying the faculties as independent existences or "things" and the second was explaining mental experience as self-determined activities of the reified faculties (Kosits, 2002c). Interestingly, Upham avoids the reification error by insisting that "it is undoubtedly true, that the human soul is to be regarded as constituting a nature which is one and indivisible..." and that dividing the mind into faculties did not constitute a process of hypostatization, but was simply a consideration of the mind from different "points of view." Yet Upham, despite his

assertions to the contrary, so emphasized the distinctions between faculties as to lean in the direction of the reification error. For example, immediately after stating that his classification was a contemplation of the mind from three different “point of view,” Upham stated that the intellect possess unique characteristics which “...*shuts it out* from the domain of the sensibilities...” (I.51, italics mine). And, as this commentary on Upham’s psychology continues, it will become evident that he was careful to consider each “faculty” largely in isolation from the others. As such, the system takes on a contrived, theoretical tone, in which the mind is portrayed as it might be expected to function in some ideal world rather than in the phenomenological messiness of reality.

Unlike the dichotomous faculty psychology (i.e., dividing the soul into intellect and will) which had prevailed for centuries in American colleges, Upham insisted that a trichotomous division of the mental faculties into intellect, *sensibility* and will, was essential to an accurate and morally acceptable mental philosophy. He thought there was “...abundant illustration and proof” of the trichotomous division, and while intentionally avoiding evidential overkill, spent several pages elucidating his reasons for the move to trichotomy.

As was his typical practice, Upham referred his readers to their own conscious experience, which he was confident his readers could consult and know with ease: “mental philosophers assure us that we are enabled, by means of consciousness, to ascertain what thought and feeling are in themselves, and to distinguish them from each other” (I.52). This quote is a perfect illustration of James Hoopes (1989) contention that a main characteristic of “the consciousness concept” of the Enlightenment was the lack of ambiguity in knowledge of our own internal states. By way of contrast, Hoopes argued

that the previous faculty psychology employed by the Puritans and others, since it supposed that intellect and will could (and often would) oppose each other, made inner experience ambiguous and in need of interpretation. Mental states are unambiguous to Upham, and clearly reveal a trichotomous structure of the mind. In an increasingly nonsectarian and secular context in which the authority of ecclesiastic structures was being undermined, Upham and others found in consciousness a sure “authority” and “aid” (I.53), which was to be trusted in resolving a multitude of psychological and ethical issues.

Upham was reasonably confident to assert that there was a general agreement that “intellections” and “volitions” were separable phenomena. Yet, Upham noted, with both typical confidence that his internal experience accurately reflected universal experience, and with intellectualist sensibility, “...our consciousness, if we will but attend to its intimations with proper care, will probably teach us, that the nature of a volition more nearly approaches that of a purely intellectual act than it does the distinctive nature of emotions and desires.” This provided a ground for making a separation of volition from the “sensibilities” (i.e., the emotions and desires).

Upham also thought that language provided “unbiased” support for his trichotomization of mind, quoting a variety of sources which made admittedly incidental references to three different types of conscious experience. For example, Upham referred to “the popular author of *Literary Hours*...” whose “...interesting biographical sketch of Sir Richard Steele” explained the subject’s “inconsistencies” and “feeble performances” as being due to “...the feebleness of the will.” Yet, in this explanation, Upham delighted to note that the author “...incidentally, but very clearly...” made the trichotomous

distinction. Upham quoted this author thus: ““His misfortune, the cause of all his errors, was not to have clearly seen where his deficiencies lay; they were neither of the head nor of the heart, but of the volition”” (I.55). Among his several examples (which included Locke and Hume), Upham even quoted “President Edwards,” who, “in his Diary of private and personal experiences, under date of Jan. 12th, 1723...in speaking of the consecration which he felt it his duty to make of himself to God, and of the self-renunciation consequent upon it, says: ‘I can challenge no right in this understanding, this will, these affections, which are in me.’” Upham thus proposed to expound a system of psychology which his Puritan forebears, including the great Edwards himself, had actually unknowingly espoused.

Whatever the validity of this connection to Edwards, Upham was connected in a more subtle way to the famed author of The Freedom of the Will. As Guelzo (1989) argued, Edwards followers (“the New Divinity”) were forced to clarify issues which Edwards had left unclear in his Treatise. One of these issues was the perplexing issue of spiritual substance, i.e., the nature of the thing which underlay the thoughts and feelings of the human mind. This was the occasion of an in-house debate between “exercisers” who denied the reality of spiritual substance and instead argued (in order to protect the justice of God) that the human soul consists simply in exercises which are ultimately determined by God, and the “tasters” who (also to protect the justice of God) argued that human beings were in possession of a distinct spiritual substance which gave rise to volitions. Upham quotes at length the “king of the tasters,” the Reverend Asa Burton, to support his trichotomous cause:

A writer of our own country, who has furnished some valuable contributions to a knowledge of our mental structure, expresses himself thus: ‘...when we attend to the affections and to volitions, it is evident there is a generic difference between them. It is evident that pain, pleasure, and desires are not volitions, and have no similarity to those voluntary exertions which produce...There is, therefore, no more propriety in classing the affections and volitions together, than in making but one class of the affections and perceptions. The affections and volitions so widely differ, that they naturally divide themselves into two distinct general classes.’ (I.58-59)

Ironically, although Burton utilized the trichotomous division to support traditional Calvinist doctrines such as original sin and regeneration, Upham would transform Burton’s trichotomous psychology into an Arminian mechanism for self-determination.

The External Intellect and the Will

The Origin of Knowledge

Upham began his treatment of the intellect by connecting knowledge of the material world with the design of God. We might say a theological functionalism characterizes the entire work. “Providence has obviously designed and established an intimate connexion between the soul and the material world.” Evidence of this fact is found “...in the mere fact of the existence of an external creation” (I.65). Certainly God did not create the world full of beautiful and interesting objects “for nothing,” but rather created minds to perceive and delight in their beauty. All of the sensory apparatus is given by God to put us in contact with the material world:

The question, then, immediately recurs, What is the meaning of the expenditure of the Divine goodness in the formation of the eye, in the windings and ingenious construction of the ear, and in the diffusion of the sense of touch? We cannot give a satisfactory answer to this question, except on the ground that there is a designed and established connexion between the mind and the material world. (I.66)

Upham considers the origin of knowledge, arguing against a strong empiricist “tabula rasa” account, insisting that the mind “...may be compared to a stringed instrument.” Although the instrument possesses the capacity to make music, it must come into contact with someone to play it in order to function. So too, the human mind comes to life as it encounters the outside world. “This living and curious instrument, which was before voiceless and silent, sends forth its sounds of harmony as soon as it is swept by outward influences” (I.67). Once the mind is “...brought into action, ...it finds new sources of thought and feeling in itself” (I.68). Upham offered some thoughts on the development of the mind from infancy, and provided examples to illustrate the necessity of external stimulation for the proper development of the intellect. Since the mind is totally dependent upon contact with the outside world for knowledge, he also explicitly argued against innate knowledge.

Upham thought that his “...doctrine of outward sources of knowledge,” was therefore a good balance between the two extremes of empiricism and nativism. Although dependent upon the outside world for its proper development, the mind develops qualities and abilities that cannot be reduced to or explained by its experience.

This theory "...combines Sensationalism and Intellectualism, the Sensuous and the Super-sensuous, in one conjoined and harmonious system" (I.82).

External Intellect: Sensation

Upham began his discussion of the "external intellect" with two caveats. The first point, which is crucial to understanding his psychological system, is that "...each power, each susceptibility, has its appropriate place. And the examination of a power out of the right place causes much perplexity" (I. 83). In order to understand perception, for example, one must study perception. Memory must precede reasoning, etc. Upham warned that "...even a slight deviation from the true order of arrangement...produces more or less of perplexity and confusion" (I.83). Upham's psychological system is nothing if not well-ordered, stressing the logical interconnections between the various powers of the mind. Utilizing this method, he constructed a system of psychology that claimed to fairly represent God's original design for the human mind—a considerable contrast to James Principles, which have been criticized by their lack of organization.

Upham first attempted to describe sensation as a mental state, and then the power of sensation. The state of mind called sensation is simple, and therefore "unsusceptible of definition." Nevertheless, he could affirm that sensation immediately follows impressions on the sensory organs, yet takes place in the mind. Further, sensation as a mental phenomenon, although dependent upon the body is still inexplicable in physical terms. "We find ourselves unable to resolve and explain the connexion between mind and matter in this case, as we do in all others. All we know and all we can state with confidence is, that a mental affection is immediately subsequent to an affection or change which is physical" (I.89).

External Intellect: The Perceptive Power

After sensation Upham placed perception, which "...differs from sensation as a whole does from a part." He defined perception as "... an affection or state of the mind *which is immediately successive to certain affections of the organ of sense, and which is referred by us to something external as its cause*" (I.89-90). Whereas sensation is "...the [simple] state of the mind, without reference to anything external which might be the cause of it..." while perception is "...is the name of a complex mental state, including not merely the internal affection of the mind, but also a reference to the exterior cause." While sensation is entirely within, perception "...carries us, as it were, out of ourselves, and makes us acquainted with the world around us." Perception therefore guards the mind against the error of solipsism: "Perception or perceptivity prevents the possibility of such a mistake...it undeceives and dissipates the flattering notion that all things are in the soul; it leads us to other existences, and, in particular, to the knowledge of the vast and complicated fabric of the material creation" (I.90). Upham closed his chapter with a discussion of the primary and secondary qualities of objects, which are not entirely relevant to the topic at hand.

External Intellect: The Senses

Another topic which is not necessary to discuss in detail is Upham's explication of the five senses. Although God has a perfect knowledge of all objects without use of physical organs, human beings are so designed that these organs are needed to gain this knowledge. Upham emphasizes the wisdom of "our Maker" throughout this section in the way in which the different senses tend to provide information which the other senses do not. Upham recognized the role of physiology, but did not emphasize it: "As a general

statement, when the brain has been in any way injured, the inward- sensation, which would otherwise be distinct on the presentation of an external body, is imperfect” (I.95). As is typical of his approach, Upham had a clear rationale for the order of his discussion of the senses, beginning with the senses which would “...cause us the least difficulty in the analysis of its results,” and proceeding “...to others successively, as we find them increasing in importance.” Beginning with smell, Upham discussed taste, linking these two senses as particularly useful regarding food.

Throughout the discussion, Upham emphasizes the design and wisdom of the senses, describing how each organ is “precisely adapted” (I.100) for its appointed task. Simple survival is part of God’s plan. For example, taste and smell work together as part of the “...benevolent provision for protecting men and the animal creation generally against the introduction of what would be noxious to them” (I.100). This is a form of “doxological science” (Bozeman, 1977). The best example of this is Upham’s description of the eye. According to the dictates of “...benevolent Providence,”

On a slight examination, the eye is found to be a sort of telescope, having its distinct parts, and discovering throughout the most exquisite construction. The medium on which this organ acts are rays of light, everywhere diffused, and always advancing, if they meet with no opposition, in direct lines. The eye, like all the other senses, not only receives externally the medium on which it acts, but carries the rays of light into itself; and, on principles purely scientific, refracts and combines them anew. It does not, however, fall within our plan to give a minute description of the eye, which belongs rather to the physiologist; but such a description, with the statement of the uses of the different parts of the organ, must

be to a candid and reflecting mind a most powerful argument in proof of the existence and goodness of the Supreme Being. How wonderful, among other things, is the adaptation of the rays of light to the eye! If these rays were not of a texture extremely small, they would cause much pain to the organ of vision, into which they so rapidly pass. If they were not capable of exciting within us the sensations of colour, we should be deprived of much of that high satisfaction which we now take in beholding surrounding objects; showing forth, wherever they are to be found, the greatest variety and the utmost richness of tints. (I.117-118).

The comment about the physiologist is similar to the kind that would be made by James, with the exception that the New Psychology would use physiology as a way of setting boundaries with the old psychology. Although Upham does quote scientific sources, the reports he cites are usually anecdotal rather than experimental (e.g., I.124). He also discusses issues which are still discussed in the area of sensation and perception, such as the estimation of distances (I.126). Nevertheless, Upham's psychology lacks the profound respect for physiology that characterized William James.

External Intellect: The Evils of Idealism

Throughout his discussion to this point, Upham spoke as if "material objects" had real existence. Yet, following his Scottish common sense forebears, the topic of idealism had to be mentioned and disposed of. So, before moving on to the next power of the intellect (i.e., the power of conception), Upham turned his attention to the refutation of idealism.

Upham began his defense of realism with the simple observation that "...all mankind...believe in outward objects..." (I.133). Yet, it had to be conceded that the senses can sometimes deceive. For example, "... a straight stick, thrust into the water, appears to us crooked..." (I.133). This is not evidence of fallacy, however, just imperfection and limitation. Given the limitations of the senses, we come to perceive them as fallacious only as a "...consequence of our expecting too much of them" (I.134). Given that the sense are designed by God, the seeker after truth can "...confidently expect to be led by them into the truth, so far as our Creator designed that it should be made known to us" (I.135). Upham quotes Reid at length to make that point that other cognitive errors are simple due to "want of care" in reasoning rather than faulty design of the senses. The piety of this line of reasoning is evident: Upham desired to avoid at all costs accusing the creator of wrongdoing or imperfection of design.

Given these and other defenses for the general reliability of the senses, Upham turned his attention to the actual existence of the material world. Belief in the material world is human nature, and if a person "...gives himself up to the instinctive tendencies of his nature," he can not "...doubt the reality of such an external, material creation." The idealist "objection" to this observation, Upham explained, was that the senses do not actually refer to an outward object as they seem. A person may be convinced that outward objects exist, but simply be deceived. This contention serves as "the basis of the doctrine known as IDEALISM."

Without attempting to make idealism plausible (Edwards had, after all, embraced it), Upham unleashed his refutation. Given the primacy of consciousness in his system, he repeated the universal belief in the reality of outward objects. Upham was always

impressed with universal beliefs, and thought that rejecting such a belief "...ought not to be lightly asserted." Indeed, following Stewart, he argued that the very character of God would be impugned if such beliefs were false:

But to create man so that he should be irresistibly led to believe in the existence of a material world when it did not exist, to create him with high capacities of thought, feeling, and action, and then to surround him with mere illusive and imaginary appearances, does not agree with that notion of God which we are wont to entertain. (I.144)

Upham's primary concern, it seems, was to avoid "skepticism." "...If the senses are not a ground of belief and knowledge, the way is fairly open for unlimited skepticism on *all* subjects" (I.145, italics mine). Among these subjects is morality itself: "It will in this case be impossible to fix upon anything whatever which is to be received as evidence, and men must give up all knowledge of intellect as well as matter, and will be at once released from all moral obligation" (I.145). To the contrary, the senses provided "foundations" of knowledge, and, "...effectually cause belief..." Guelzo (1989) noted that Edwards thought that this fear of skepticism had been misplaced, and that the real danger was that of materialism. Although Upham did discuss the evils of materialism, it is clear in this case, and throughout his entire book, that skepticism was a more pressing concern. If Edwards was right, however, that materialism was the issue, the mental philosophy of Thomas Upham and other nineteenth century American mental philosophers may have left the Protestant establishment unprepared for the challenges that lay ahead.

External Intellect: Habit

Upham turned from his consideration of idealism to the topic of habit. Previously, Upham had mentioned that habit "...indicates a law of the mind's action; and back of that law, inasmuch as law is only the form or mode of activity, there is and must be a principle of power" (I.131). When considered as a power, habit cannot be considered a uniquely cognitive power. The "mighty influence" of habit "...is felt in all the three leading Departments under which the mind is to be considered..." (I.131-132). In due time, Upham promised to discuss the effects of habit upon each of these three "Departments."

When considering the habits of sensation and perception, Upham made the more specific comment that habit cannot strictly speaking be considered a cognitive power since it does not actually increase knowledge. Nevertheless, habit can facilitate and improve the cognitive powers. Habit can therefore be considered an "auxiliary power." Although it is difficult to define habit, Upham thought it easy to examine and describe the *results* of habit, which are "*That the [given] mental action acquires facility and strength from repetition or practice.*" One striking characteristic of this definition and of Upham's tone whenever he discusses habit, is its positiveness. Whereas William James would famously speak of habit in the Principles as if it were primarily a loss of freedom, Upham saw it as a great help in right thinking. Certainly James thought habit was a help, but his tone was quite foreboding. Upham is more upbeat. For example, Upham saw habit in "...the dexterity of workmen in the different manual arts, [in] the rapidity of the accountant, [in] the coup d'ceil or eye-glance of the military engineer, [in] the tact and fluency of the extemporaneous speaker, and in other like instances" (I.148).

Habit conjoins bodily and mental effort, and may serve as a kind of replacement to will. If a particular muscular effort is continually linked with the volition, it may be “...rendered so prompt by habit, that we are unable distinctly to recollect any exercise of volition previous to the active or muscular exertion” (I.148). Although habit had previously implied automaticity and predictibleness of action, we see that a result of Upham’s libertarian definition of will included a strict demarcation of habit and will. Whereas the term will was previously used as a general non-specific term demarcating the moral side of human nature, Upham had narrowed the “office” of the will considerably. Given its limited jurisdiction, it could therefore be frequently overridden. Although Upham only had slight intimations of the results of this understanding, we find in James’s voluntary psychology that the jurisdiction of the will would only continue to decrease in size. To change metaphors, the homunculus would, throughout the nineteenth century, decrease in size until it became a non-entity. At the root of this shrinkage was the desire to find some aspect of human activity which is free from the powers of determination.

When applying the power of habit to the senses, the tone continues in a largely positive manner. Habit, when applied to smell, facilitates the “discrimination of odours” (I.149). Similarly, habit improves the discriminating abilities of taste (I.150), and improves the musicians’ ear (I.152). Habits “...imply increased quickness and power wherever they exist” (I.161). Habits also increase the skill required by particular “callings.” For example, the farmer may assess the quality of a piece of land with amazing facility and quickness (I.163). Indeed, Upham rhapsodizes about the abilities of habit and the wisdom of their Creator:

[Habits]...evinced the striking powers of the human mind, its irrepressible energies, which no obstacles can bear down. They evince also the benevolence of our Creator, who opens in the hour of misery new sources of comfort, and compensates for what we have not by increasing the power and value of what we have (I.162).

Yet, always ready to draw a moral from a psychological principle, Upham sounded the notes of warning, noting that habit can also lead to the strengthening of impious desires. Drawing upon a favorite example of mental philosophers, Upham noted that although “the bibber of wine and the drinker of ardent spirits readily acknowledge[s], that the sensation was at first only moderately pleasing, and perhaps in the very slightest degree,” that his overindulgence in “ardent spirits” gradually creates “...a prisoner, a captive, a deformed, altered, and degraded slave” (I.151). Each additional “indulgence” is an “addition of a new weight” which “...lessen[s] the probability of escape” (I.151).

To add to the weight of this moral lesson, Upham quoted a pamphlet published in the London Quarterly Review entitled “the Confessions of a Drunkard” (I.152), which describes the descent into such bondage. The excerpt includes a passage (apparently advocating the avoidance of alcohol altogether) that, like James’s admonition in his chapter on Habit, addresses the young: “Could the youth, to whom the flavour of his first wine is delicious as the opening scenes of life...be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when a man shall feel himself [to]...have no power to stop...it were enough to make him sash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation” (I.152).

Yet, even in the face of the possibility of addiction, Upham maintained his optimism and faith in effort and willpower. Although his Calvinist forebears tended to see “slavery” to the more subtle sins as normal, Upham thought that slavery was rare, and believed, like a true “Pelagian,” that God had designed human nature with adequate power to set oneself free from impending bondage and that original sin did not significantly diminish this ability. Even in the case of the “bibber” of wine: “we do not mean to say that he is the subject of an implacable destiny, and cannot help himself. But it would seem that he can help himself only in this way; by a prompt, absolute, and entire suspension of the practice in all its forms, which has led him into this extremity” (I.152). Nevertheless, Upham conceded that few winebibbers “...have the resolution...” to exercise such willpower when the addiction becomes sufficiently intense. This move toward effort and willpower was an Arminian move, a strict narrowing of the domain of the will in order to preserve some territory over which the will might be sovereign.

The topic of “muscular habits” was also a concern to Upham. Upham noted that “some writers,” including Reid and Hartley, contended “...that bodily or muscular habits operate in many cases without design and volition on the part of the person who has formed them; and that, as they are without any attendant thought, without any preceding mental operation, such bodily acts are to be considered as purely mechanical or automatic.” Given that Upham’s Arminian psychology is thoroughly concerned with the control of the agent over his actions, this issue was a great concern to Upham. One example of these thinkers was that of learning to play the harpsichord:

When a person first begins to learn, it is admitted by all that there is an express act of volition preceding every motion of the fingers. By degrees, the motions appear

to cling to each other mechanically; we are no longer conscious of volitions preceding and governing them. In other words, there is nothing left but the motions; there is no act of the mind; the performance, admirable as it is, has the same character and the same merit with that of the action of a well-contrived machine. (I.169)

The similarity with James's psychology of habit here is striking, and it is noteworthy that James shared a deep concern with the automaticity of behavior.

Although Upham readily granted that activities such as playing the harpsichord are often attended with "...the appearance of being independent of the will," Upham, in an attempt to argue that the domain of the will was not shrinking, assured his readers that this was indeed "*mere appearance*" (italics mine), for four reasons. First, the law of habit applies to all faculties of the soul, and, in the case of volition, apparently automatic behavior is attended with "very rapid" volitions which are not attended carefully and therefore quickly forgotten. Second, talented players of musical instruments are able to change tempo voluntarily. When playing slowly, they can pay close attention to each movement and therefore be aware of the voluntary nature of their playing. But when playing quickly, they cannot attend carefully to the various movements, and therefore cannot remember the individual volitions. To deny this account, Upham thought, implied "...an inexplicable jumble of voluntary and involuntary actions in the same performance" (I.170). Third, if one assumes that these muscular habits are automatic, then there is no middle road: "...the action must be strictly and truly automatic; that is, it must, from the nature of the case, be the motion of a machine." As a machine, the playing must be invariable and predictable [note that James thought of mechanism in the same way].

Since the playing of musical instruments is far from predictable, they cannot be done without purpose or volition.

Finally, Upham prophesied regarding the effects of the mechanistic theory of muscular habit. If the theory is allowed in this domain, there is no reason why it could not be applied to activities other than muscular movements. If this is allowed, “it will be the result of this tendency to wrest all those powers which it [habit] reaches, whether bodily or mental, from the control of the will.” To put the issue a bit differently, “...this principle [of muscular habits] will infallibly make men machines, mere automatons, before they have lived out half their days” (I.171). In Upham’s mind, determinism was a threat to his self-determined Arminian will, and he felt that threat as a loss of sovereignty and power in the faculty.

External Intellect: Conception

Upham moved next to “a third Cognitive power,” conception. Arguing always from a functional standpoint, Upham immediately discussed the necessity of this power. Sensation, the first power, does not provide knowledge of things outside of the self. Perception, the second power, limits knowledge to things immediately before the person. “A little reflection,” Upham therefore noted, “...shows us that we need another power, which will enable us to keep our past knowledges [sic] in our possession, when the objects of knowledge have passed beyond the reach of our senses. This is the “conceptive power.” The conceptive power works when the objects of thought are not present, but differ from memory because “we take no account of...the particular time, when those objects which laid the foundation of them were present...” (I.173). His chapter on conception has little to do with volition, except for the fact that he looked at

the relation between habit and conception, and also made a passing reference to how conceptions "...are sometimes attended with belief; when they are very lively, we are apt to ascribe to them a real outward existence, or believe in them." Our proclivity to believe our ideas is a topic that James did address, particularly in terms of "reality." Indeed, James's chapter on the perception of reality contains his theory of belief, a theory very relevant to volition, as we shall see. Further, given the strong traditional link between the psychology of belief and the psychology of volition, these comments do not seem irrelevant.

Simple vs. Complex Thoughts

Before moving on to the next cognitive power (i.e., abstraction), Upham devoted a chapter explaining the difference between simple and complex thoughts. Again, this is not a topic that is particularly relevant to the topic of will, but Upham does repeatedly make reference to the simplicity of particular thoughts because he saw these thoughts as being accessible only through the powers of introspection. Further, since simple states of mind can be *known* through introspection, Upham saw these states as the very foundation of knowledge.

The division between simple and complex "mental affections" is given by nature. Simple "state[s] of mind" (I.184) are indivisible, i.e., they cannot be broken into parts. Whenever it is possible to "detect...more than one element..." simplicity is lost. Simple states of mind are also indefinable, because true definitions require that the thing being defined be broken down into elements. Finally, simple mental states are necessarily linked to reality, while complex thoughts may often have no real thing "corresponding to them." Therefore, simple ideas are of utmost epistemological usefulness. "Whenever, in

our analysis of a subject, we arrive at truly simple ideas, we have firm footing; there is no mistake, no delusion.” Epistemological error occurs when human beings combine “...the elements which nature furnishes...” in a false way. Upham tended to think that simple mental shapes precede complex, and he challenged the idea “...that some...of our complex notions are framed at once and immediately, whenever an occasion presents itself, and are not necessarily dependent on the prior existence of any other feelings.” This would be James’s challenge to the associationists, who seemed to conceive of knowledge in much the same way as Upham. Yet, Upham argued, just as some “habitual” activities are volitional yet without awareness, the mind’s conceptions are formed so quickly that it is possible to fail to notice the simple constituent ideas involved in that cognition. Conversely, Upham also desired to avoid the idea that complex notions are “...*literally* made up of parts...” but “...have the relation to them which any material whole has to the elements composing it” (I. 190, italics mine).

Upham thought that only two of the three “Departments” of the mind are capable of having complex states of mind: the Intellect and the Sensibility. It is possible to have a “complex affection” just as it is possible to have a “complex perception.” But the “acts of the Will” are “always simple” (I.191). Such a formulation allowed Upham to feel quite confident in his assertions about the will. Given the Edwardsean critique that the very existence of the Arminian is in doubt, the fact that Upham would consider his conscious experience of will to be unproblematically reliable is indeed an ironic twist in the story.

Excursus: The True Philosophical Method

Upham completed his chapter on simplicity and complexness with what seems to be a tangent: a discussion of philosophical method. The links to simplicity and complexity are there, however. Upham tackled an objection to the idea that the mind first requires simple ideas before being able to have complex ones. These problem with this idea, it was contended, was that it "...makes the whole visible creation a mere aggregate...of attributes, qualities, or properties." A person holding this objection might say, "What we behold yonder...is mere greenness, resistance, hardness, form, &c., but nothing more; it is not a TREE. In the firmament there is brightness, and heat, and roundness, and uniformity of motion, but that is all; we mistake when we suppose there is a reality, an actual SUN" (I.193). Upham saw this way of thinking as a reiteration of thought of Pyrrho and of Idealism.

Since we commonly infer the reality of things or existences from their attributes or exercises, we may from our feelings and thoughts infer the existence of mind. From the "manifestations and attributes" of God we infer the existence of God, although we do not have a direct perception of him. From the "qualities and properties of bodies" we infer the existence of matter (I.194). The mind is designed to translate these "signs" of existence into the firm and certain belief that the "thing" in question really exists.

Although these ruminations may seem far removed from a consideration of the psychology of will, they are linked to the epistemological issue that was highly relevant to the way in which the will was approached. In the days in which The Marrow of Theology was used as a textbook, knowledge was constructed within a particular moral community defined by particular theological beliefs. As I have frequently reiterated, a

primary difference in approach was the desire of nineteenth-century mental philosophers to speak to *all* people. Since the interpretation of scripture has always been a contentious affair, the irenical methods of the Enlightenment seemed to offer a way to retain the benefits of sectarianism (e.g., a common worldview and moral code), while eschewing its exclusivity and its reliance on scripture.

For this reason, Upham's comments on "the true philosophical method" (I.194) in mental philosophy seem particularly relevant to the topic of this dissertation. To review, Upham had just argued that the mind's reliance upon simple ideas did not mean that the mind is limited to knowledge of simple ideas. The mind instead automatically perceives the objects to which the simple mental states refer. It was also true, however, that the mind was designed to be *limited* in its understanding of reality: it may truly know the existences to which its ideas point, but it cannot know *all* things.

This, I believe, is the lesson Upham drew from his analysis of the simple and complex mental states. After assuring his readers that their minds were designed to allow knowledge of existences, he thought that "...at this point..." the reader was prepared to receive more information about the methods of mental philosophy. He had four points in mind. First, the "progress" of mental philosophy relies upon strictly maintaining "...the distinction...between mental philosophy and Ontology." Mental philosophy assumes that the mind exists and has certain powers and proceeds to observe and classify mental phenomena. Ontology, on the other hand, "...desirous of knowing what it is which lies back of phenomena, advances with greater boldness but with less success, and announces itself as the science of existence." Although we are "adapted" to have clear access to our mental states, we are no so well equipped to fathom "the problems of existence, which

are hidden in the Infinite or Absolute of things...” Indeed, “...any thing short of omniscience” falters in understanding ontological questions.

Second, given the adaptations and limitations of mind, it followed that the best method for understanding the mind was “the Baconian,” which:

...commencing with the rejection of all prejudices, and having no interests but those of truth, proceeds with the careful observation and the equally careful classification of mental facts, as they are disclosed not only in the sphere of our own consciousness, but as they are revealed in the observation of the thoughts and feelings of others, and in the history of men in all ages. This method, in its application to the mind, includes all the facts and intimations, especially those relating to personality and the foundation of moral distinctions, which are suggested and affirmed by the Intuitional power, as well as the knowledge coming from other sources. (I.195)

The belief that mental philosophers were capable of rejecting “all prejudices” was perhaps the leading vulnerability of the American mental philosophy movement, as it was a chief weakness of the Enlightenment in general. In moving away from the traditionally community-embedded and sectarian roots of morality Upham and other American mental philosophers thought they could put morality on firm Baconian foundations. What they did not seem to realize was the extent to which they carried out their craft with strong inclinations toward a broadly evangelical and pietistic morality. As the population of mental philosophers and psychologists became less evangelical (although retaining the results-oriented pragmatism of pietism; Hart, 2002), and the clear dictates of

introspection tended to contradict evangelical morality, the shaky foundations which Upham and other laid here would become quite clear.

Upham's third point sounds like a page out of a New Psychology textbook. A consideration of physiology facilitates the mental philosophers "...interpretation of mental action" (I.196). Up to this point, Upham had applied this principle in his discussion of the senses. Here Upham pinpointed the physiological fact that would strongly shape the introspections of William James: "the distinction first drawn and demonstrated by Sir Charles Bell between the nervous filaments connected with sensation and those connected with motion..." (I.196). While James filtered seemingly all of his introspections through this physiological insight, Upham did not integrate this fact into his psychology. This movement from recognition to integration may be seen as one of the true differences between the old and the "New" psychologies.

Upham concluded this section with the common but bold affirmation of the importance of mental philosophy. There are "...many and important departments of science, which, in their principles, if not in their applications, are based upon it, or are closely connected with it." These would include "the principles of morals, the laws of evidence, the doctrine of aesthetics, logic, language, axiomatic truths, artistic taste, the philosophy of eloquence, the philosophic relation of the sciences to each other..." Even religion, which "...connects the soul with God" relies to some extent upon mental philosophy (I.196). Here again Upham subordinates the sectarian interpretation of scripture, which was traditionally the foundation of morality and religion at American colleges, to the nonsectarian and "unprejudiced" insights of mental philosophy. The criticism made above applies here as well.

External Intellect: The Abstractive Power

Following his discussion of simple and complex ideas, Upham described the power of abstraction. Human beings frequently desire to closely examine complex thoughts by breaking them into parts. The process of breaking complex thoughts into their elements is what Upham meant by Abstraction. Although this topic is not closely related to the will, Upham did comment on the role of the will in abstraction. In abstraction, the mind desires to focus upon particular components of a “complex notion.” The will, acting in conjunction with these desires, determines which parts will be considered, and, by implication, which will be ignored: “...we may truly and justly be said to have not only a desire, but a determination to consider or examine some part of the complex idea more particularly than the others” (I.199-200). He offered the following example:

If, for example, we have in mind the complex notion of any object, a house, tree, plant, flower, and the like, but have a desire and determination to make the colour, which forms a part of this complex notion, a particular subject of attention, the consequence is, that, while the quality of colour occupies our chief regard, the other qualities will disappear and no more be thought of. If we determine to examine the weight or extension of an object, the result will be the same; in other words, the extension, weight, colour, and whatever else may be discriminated in its attributes, will become distinct and exclusive objects of attention, and will thus be mentally abstracted. (I.201)

Upham’s careful distinction between desires and volitions in the above quotations is important, indicating the radical distinction he made between desire and volition.

Whereas Edwards and other deterministic Calvinistic psychologists of will saw will as the manifestation of the strongest desire, Upham's "Arminian" psychology was careful to leave the final determination to embrace or reject the inclinations of desire up to the will.

External Intellect: Attention

Skipping Upham's interesting but largely irrelevant treatment of "general abstract ideas," we turn to his commentary on the power of attention. The previous quote illustrating Upham's view on the role of will in abstraction provides a nice segue into his consideration of attention. In that quote, Upham argues that the end of the "desire and determination" is to make a particular object the "subject of attention" (I.201). As would be the case in William James, the will and attention are therefore closely connected in Upham's psychology.

Since attention does not actually increase knowledge, Upham considered attention as an auxiliary power of the mind rather than a cognitive faculty. When a mind is in a state of attention, "...the mind is steadily directed, for a length of time, to some object of sense or intellect, exclusive of other objects" (I.217). Attention can exist in different degrees, and, as William James would also claim, is determined (i.e., "depend[s] upon") "...the strength and permanency of the attendant emotion of interest." As he was wont to do, Upham noted that certain individuals in history were noted for the power of their attention, such as Julius Caesar. Another example, "the chess-player Philidor" provides another insight into the links between volition and interest, and the awkwardness of Upham's multi-step view of human volition. Philidor:

...could direct three games of chess at the same time, of one of which only he required ocular inspection, the moves of the other two being announced to him by

an assistant. The moves of the chessmen formed the subject about which his thoughts were employed; and such was the intensity of interest and such the power of the will, that the mind found no difficulty in dwelling upon it to the entire exclusion of other subjects, and for a considerable length of time. (I.218)

In this quote Upham not only made a strong link between attention, interest and will, but also reiterated the awkward distinction between motivation and volition. In this quote Upham almost seems to equate the “intensity of interest” and “the power of the will,” yet the demarcation between them was quite deliberate: actually equating the two would be, in Upham’s mind, reducing the human to a mere machine. The will needed to hover above the inclinations of interest and arbitrate in freedom.

The power of attention, Upham explained, always has an intellectual component: the object to be attended to first needs to be specified by the mind through perception. Yet, behind the perception of the object, Upham argued, is an act of will “...directing, condensing, and confining the perception.” Behind the act of will is “...a feeling of desire or interest, which is antecedent to the volitional act, and which brings the will into action” (I.219). Yet, as will become clear below, desire and interest cannot be understood as causing volition, but standing merely as the occasion upon which the will arbitrates. The role of the will, which is occasioned but not caused by motives, is to focus the mind on this right object. Although we will see James advocating much the same notion of attention and volition, it is also worthy noting that Upham here recapitulates the position of Chubb which Edwards criticized: that acts of will are only occasioned but not caused by the motives. Edwards wondered if this undermined the coherence of the motive concept. This is a question which we will revisit as we progress.

Upham closed his consideration of the power of attention with a moral admonition that reveals the nonsectarian nature his enterprise. Upham encouraged his students to utilize their powers of attention in such a way to maximize their knowledge. In order to do this, he warned against "...a hasty and careless reading of authors..." (I.222), which entailed wandering "...from object to object..." (I.223). After this admonition, Upham addressed the "alleged inability to command the attention," which some would use to excuse themselves from this intellectual duty. These objectors "...find it difficult to retain the mind in one position..." (I.223). Upham noted that attention cannot be sustained without desire, and recommended one particular desire as uniquely conducive to sustaining intellectual efforts: "...a love of the truth." There is "...no other effective remedy than the one just mentioned, A LOVE OF THE TRUTH, a desire to know the nature and relations of things merely for the sake of knowledge" (I.224). Even Christ advocated the preeminent love of the truth: 'Christ says of himself, that 'he came into the world to bear witness to the truth'" (I.224). While Upham's more sectarian forebears would have interpreted Christ's bearing witness to the truth as relating to the particular sectarian and churchly truths of the gospel, Upham applied it to the mission of the betterment of the world: "A desire to know the truth in morals, in religion, in science, in the arts, in government, and in all the various kinds and methods of thought and inquiry, furnishes the key to much that is great and ennobling in the history of the race." Yet, as this pursuit of the truth has "foundations" which come from God, Upham could take for granted that these foundations would take care of themselves.

External Intellect: Dreaming and Somnambulism

Upham's consideration of Dreaming and Somnambulism also touched upon the will. Dreams "...are our mental states and operations while we are asleep." Upham was confident that his broad audience could relate to the fact of dreaming because "...they are so prevalent; it being very difficult, if not impossible, to find a person who has not had more or less of this experience" (I.226). Upham explained the "...wildness, inconsistency...contradiction..." and general "incoherency" of our dreams as being due, in part, to the fact that "...when we are asleep, our associated trains of thought are no longer under the control of the WILL." Although this did not mean that "...the operations of the will are suspended..." during sleep, for we feel that we are actually determining the direction of our dreams. Nevertheless, the volitions which are enacted in dreams:

...have ceased to exercise their customary influence in respect to our mental operations. Ordinarily we are able, by means of an act of the will, to fix our attention upon some particular part of any general subject which has been suggested, or to transfer it to some other part of such subject, and thus to direct and to regulate the whole train of mental action. But, the moment we are soundly asleep, this influence ceases, and hence, in connexion with the other cause already mentioned, arise the wildness, incoherency, and contradictions which exist.
(I.230)

This passage reveals that Upham thought of the will as the glue which kept the mind in control of itself. Again, this conception of will is considerably narrower than the conception found in Ames and Edwards. Arminian psychology, concerned as it was with

the human ability to exert its own power in the world, may also be understood as a psychology of self-control and self-assertion.

Upham also turned to the will to explain why dreams have the strong appearance of reality. "...Dreaming conceptions have the appearance of reality [because]...they are not susceptible of being controlled, either directly or indirectly, by mere volition."

Typically, perceptions of objects that always produce the same effects in us and do not depend upon the will are perceived as real. Since "essentially the same circumstances exist in dreaming" as in cases where we do not have control over our perceptions, we also experience our dreams as involuntary.

As one strongly interested in the power of the will, it is not surprising that Upham would find the topic of somnambulism to be an issue "...of considerable interest and importance" (I.236). "Somnambulists," Upham explained, "are persons who are capable of walking and of other *voluntary actions* while asleep" (I.236, italics mine). Among the interesting facts associated with this condition were that somnambulists often did not remember engaging in their nocturnal activities, until being shown evidence of these activities. Although Upham did not hesitate in calling these muscular movements as being due to "volitions" (I.237), he asked how the muscles could remain active while the senses are "asleep" (I.237). His answer sounds very modern and scientific, saying that a satisfactory answer will ultimately require "further investigations" and that the final answer will probably be related to the structure of the nervous system. It is puzzling that Upham did not address the apparent tension between his assertion that the activities of sleepwalkers are voluntary, and yet often happen outside of conscious awareness and

control. He was nevertheless more deferential in this section, holding out hope that science would shed light on the problem.

The Internal Intellect and the Will

Having completed the first part of his analysis of the human intellect, i.e., the “External intellect,” Upham moved to a consideration of the “internal intellect.” To review, the external intellect is designed to gain knowledge of the “material world around us.” God gave “material eyes” and “material hands” to human beings so that they might know the world around them. But he also gave human beings the ability to know the “super-sensational” world. Some of what Upham said in this context was related to the topic of the will.

Here Upham educates his readers on the contemporary meaning of the terms “intellectualism” and “sensationalism.” The term intellectualism, of course, is enormously important in the history of the psychology of will. But, while intellectualism is contrasted with voluntarism when considered as a theory of will, Upham’s antithesis, “sensationalism,” suggests that the term was being used in a different way in the early nineteenth century.

The terms intellectualism and sensationalism were for Upham epistemological terms. Sensationalism is the doctrine that humans derive knowledge through the senses. Intellectualism “...accepts sensationalism as far as it goes, but...affirms that there is something beyond it.” The human soul has “...hidden fountains of knowledge...” in itself, which go beyond the information inputted by the senses. For corroboration, Upham quoted Locke and Cudworth expressing similar opinions, and, in a footnote, argued that “many other writers, as Stewart, Degerando, Brown, Coleridge, Price,

Jouffroy, and Cousin, advocate this general doctrine. Many German writers, with Leibnitz at their head, take the same view” (I.248). He also mentioned Kant as an advocate of this doctrine.

“But it ought not to pass unnoticed, that there have been writers who have objected to the doctrine of an internal source of knowledge in distinction from that knowledge which is outward, and is dependent, not only for its occasion, but for its very nature, on the senses” (I.248-249).

Among those arguing that “...all our knowledge might be traced to the senses, and that, of course, no other origin of it need be sought,” (I.249) were Hobbes, Gassendi, Condillac. Upham’s problem with this line of thought was that it was “to lower the mind’s position; not only to limit the range, but to depress the character of its powers.” Particularly troubling is the way it by consequence “...rejects the doctrine of a Moral Sense and of the Immutability of Moral Distinctions” (I.250). Upham agreed that sensation was certainly required to activate the powers of mind, and could “...justly be considered the OCCASION of the introductory step to all our knowledge” (I.251). Sensation could never, however, account for “the whole amount of...” our knowledge. Where the senses give a knowledge of color and smell and hardness, the super-sensuous abilities of the mind suggest concepts such as “the ideas of right and wrong, of unity and number, of time and space, order, proportion, similitude, truth, wisdom, power, obligation, succession, cause, effect, and many others...” (I.253).

Upham thought that the internal intellect could be divided into “four leading Cognitive principles,” Intuition, Consciousness, Judgment, and Reasoning. He summarized these four powers thus:

The Intuitional or Suggestional power, which gives us a knowledge of things in the absolute; Consciousness, which gives us a knowledge of mental states and operations; Relative Suggestion or Judgment, by means of which we become acquainted with the immediate relations of objects; and Reasoning, which gives us a knowledge of relations that are more remote. (I.255)

Internal Intellect: Intuitional Power

Of the “four leading Cognitive principles,” Upham thought that Intuitional was “first in nature,” since it “...deals with those elementary truths which are fundamental to all others” (I.256). The “intuitional power” gives rise to knowledge by “its own original activity and vigor,” depending neither on sensation or reasoning. The “appropriate objects” of the intuition are “things in the absolute,” which have three characteristics. They are “necessary in their origin,” “essential and immutable,” and “are objects which are common to all.” Examples of ideas with “intuitional origin” are those of existence, mind, matter, self-existence, personal identity, motion, duration, space, power, right and wrong, and others. His writing on right and wrong illustrates his line of thinking here: “...whenever objects fitted to excite a moral approval or disapproval are presented to our notice, the ideas of RIGHT and WRONG naturally and necessarily arise within us” (I.276). Although our five senses do not directly perceive right and wrong, our minds are designed nevertheless to know it. More directly related to the topic of the will, the idea of “power” is also suggested by the mind to all people. Although human beings can see that “there is indeed a Power, unexplored and invisible, which has reared the mountains, which rolls the ocean, and which propels the sun in his course,” and that human power is therefore relatively limited, it is also true that man “...possesses, as an attribute of his

own nature, an amount of real efficiency suited to the limited, sphere which Providence has allotted him.” For Upham this intuition was an axiomatic and “...simple statement of the fact.” Power is a necessary part of being an intelligent and accountable creature of God. “There is no *accountable* existence without power...” (I.274). Upham’s assertion here, consistent with the sentiments of nineteenth century theology, but divergent from the Calvinism of Ames and Edwards, is that fallen human beings possess the requisite *moral* powers for right living.

How is it that a human mind learns that it possesses such power? Upham outlined three ways. First, human beings naturally assign causes to all events in the world, and these causes imply power. Second, humans are aware of the fact that they have control over their muscular actions, and third, “within certain limits and to a certain extent...” the will appears to have control over mental states (I.274). Although the idea of power “...is not seen by the material eye, nor reached by the sense of touch...” it nevertheless emerges “...of itself from the mind, like a star from the depths of the firmament, it reveals itself distinctly and brightly to the intellectual vision” (I.275). As it will become clearer as we proceed, this “star from the depths of the firmament,” is precisely that “modern prevailing notion” of the will that Edwards so despised.

Upham closed his discussion of the intuitional power with an “additional practical remark” on how the intuition is capable of receiving “inspiration from higher sources.” Again, his comments reveal that Upham the mental philosopher advocated a form of Pelagianism, or the notion that human beings are capable of satisfying moral requirements. How does one open himself to receive inspiration from God? Upham outlined three steps here. First, a person simply needs “faith in this great fact, that there

is thus an open door of communication between God and man,” second, “...a sincere desire that God, who never violates our freedom, will by means of his inspirational influences come into communication with us,” and, third, “...a freedom from all biases and prejudices of self-will-in other words, unselfishness.” While Calvinists such as Ames and Edwards would have attributed the requirement to be unselfish as impossible apart from the regenerating work of God’s Holy Spirit, Upham apparently thought that his audience simply needed a nudge to use powers they already possessed. Further, Upham’s comment that God will never violate human freedom is also a radical departure from Calvinism, and an enthusiastic embrace of the “Arminian” and enlightened viewpoints of the age. Finally, the comments also reveal the way in which mental philosophers naively universalized their now obviously contextualized intuitions. Again, this nonsectarian intuitional strategy could maintain a religiously informed understanding of human nature before the Civil War because it was implemented by evangelical Protestants in the evangelical Protestant culture of the academy. Yet, as the culture of the academy changed, so to would the results of this method.

Internal Intellect: Consciousness

From intuition, the first source of knowledge belonging to the external intellect, Upham proceeded to the “second source,” consciousness. Just as intuition provides knowledge of “things in the absolute or unconditional,” consciousness is “...the way or method in which we obtain the knowledge of those objects which belong to the mind itself, and which do not, and cannot, exist independently of some mind” (I.282). Acts of consciousness include three “notions or feelings:” first, the idea of the self (which is supplied through the intuitional power), second, “...some quality, state, or operation of

the mind, whatever it may be...,” and, third, the sense that that “quality, state, or operation” belongs to the self. Upham reiterated the point made in the introduction that consciousness is “...a ground or law of belief,” such that “it appears to be utterly out of our power to avoid believing beyond a doubt that the mind experiences certain sensations, or has certain thoughts, or puts forth particular intellectual operations, whenever, in point of fact, that is the case” (I.282). Upham’s intent here appears to have been epistemological, affirming that since God designed the mind in such a way, that such beliefs could be seen as trustworthy. The mental states which consciousness knows include perception, conception, memory, judgment, desires, and emotions, which constitute the subject matter of mental philosophy. For this reason the power of consciousness was crucial to Upham. In view of the enormous importance of consciousness for Upham’s psychology, it is interesting that he does not address in any significant way the potential shortcomings of this faculty’s knowledge of mental states. On the other hand, Upham’s neglect of this topic is perhaps predictable for that very reason.

Internal Intellect: Judgment

The third of the cognitive powers following intuition and consciousness is judgment, which is “...the power of bringing [the mind’s] thoughts together, and of placing them side by side, and comparing them.” As is typical of Upham, he shows how other mental philosophers have approached the topic, and that some have called this power “relative suggestion,” while others have named it “judgment.” Like intuition and consciousness, judgment is “...an ultimate fact in our mental nature,” that is, it “...cannot be resolved into any other” mental fact. When different physical or mental objects are

presented to the mind, the power of judgment immediately perceives relations such as being "...equal or unequal, like or unlike, as being the same or different in respect to place and time, as having the same or different causes and ends, and in various other respects" (I.290). Upham provided a detailed analysis of the different types of relations that the judgment suggests, and the occasions in which these relations arise. An example related to the will is the relation of cause and effect between objects. The process begins "when the antecedence to [an]...event, or the sequence of any kind, is our own volition..." (I.301). As we learned in his section on intuition, this brings about the "...new idea of POWER." This notion of power leads naturally to a notion of cause, and the invariable consequences of the volitions leads to a notion of effects.

Internal Intellect: Association

Having discussed intuition, consciousness and judgment as three of the four sources of knowledge located in the intellect, Upham put the consideration of the fourth source (reasoning) on hold to discuss certain "powers of the mind" which are "subordinate to the reasoning power" yet which are "essential to its action." These powers are association and memory. Association is related to the fact "...that our thoughts and feelings follow each other in a regular train." Upham took this to be a universal experience. After providing few examples from leading mental philosophers, he outlined the basic laws of association, i.e., resemblance, contrast, contiguity, cause and effect, which are "the primary laws." Upham also outlined "secondary laws" of association, which include lapse of time, which is the idea that "...our trains of thought and emotion are more or less strongly connected and likely to be restored, according as

the lapse of time has been greater or less.” In other words, as time passes, all else equal, the chains of association grow weaker.

Upham, like Edwards, also duly noted how the powers of association can lead to intellectual errors. When “...the power of association so combines one object of thought with another that the object cannot readily be looked at and examined by itself, it so far has the effect to perplex and hinder correct judgment” (I.327). Although the powers of association are a kind adaptation granted by Providence as a means of “...secur[ing] protection where it seems to be most urgently and frequently needed” (I.328), individuals need to learn “...to separate ideas which our situation and habits may have intimately combined together” (I.336), in order to avoid being misled by this power. Such an intellectual practice is crucial “....not only in pursuing the study of mental philosophy, but in the conduct of life” (I.336).

Upham, like James after him, was concerned with the deterministic implications of the powers of association. Indeed, Upham thought that a consideration of the powers of association naturally leads to the following question: “what is the degree of influence which we are able to exercise by mere volition or will over associated trains of mental states?” (I.337). Upham conceded that the will does not have a direct control over these mental events. Further, it is also true, given the nature of the will, “...that we evidently can never will the existence of anything without knowing what it is which we will or choose.” In other words, “...the act of volition necessarily implies a perceived or known object of volition...” (I.337). This is the case in recollection. We cannot will to remember a particular event, for example, without first having some notion of that even

in mind. Despite these hindrances to the power of the will over association, Upham argued that the will does have an indirect power in this regard.

Although the will does not have the power to originate associations, "...its influence is very considerable..." (I.338). Upham named two ways the will has indirect power over association. First, the will has "...the power of checking or delaying the succession of mental states" (I.338). While suspending thought in this way, the mind is presented with "...different trains of thought..." If there is a desire to do so, the will can fixate upon certain elements in the train, and ignore others. In this manner "...we are able to exercise a considerable indirect power in calling up associations," (I.339) as well as the power to select among them. Another way one can gain control over association is through habit, which, in turn, can be formed through the action of the will. Upham's examples in this regard, e.g., developing the power of rhyming or effective public speaking, are more intellectual than moral.

Internal Intellect: Memory

Upham's treatment of memory, another power of the mind which does not originate knowledge but is necessary to advance it, does not deal directly with the will. After laying down some principles for the improvement of memory, however, he makes suggestions regarding the education of children. These suggestions shed light on the nonsectarian Protestant religious context in which he wrote.

First, the idea that children were fragile and in need of careful nurture is manifest in his comment that, given the laws of memory:

...a single remark of a profligate and injurious tendency, made by a parent or some other person in the presence of a child, though forgotten and neglected at

the time, may be suddenly and vividly recalled some twenty, thirty, or even forty years after. It may be restored to the mind by a multitude of unforeseen circumstances, and even those of the most trifling kind; and even at the late period when the voice that uttered it is silent in the grave, may exert a most pernicious influence. It may lead to unkindness; it may be seized and cherished as a justification of secret moral and religious delinquencies; it may prompt to a violation of public laws, and in a multitude of ways conduct to sin, to ignominy, and wretchedness. Great care, therefore, ought to be taken not to utter unadvised, false, and evil sentiments in the hearing of the young, in the vain expectation that they will do no hurt, because they will be speedily and irrecoverably lost. (I.373)

Although Upham in other places would put great stress on the powers of the human will to accomplish moral purposes, his depth of conviction on this point is striking. More to the point, however, is the nonsectarian Christianity that Upham encouraged his readers to inculcate:

...great care and pains should be taken to introduce truth into the mind, and all correct moral and religious principles. Suitably impress on the mind of a child the existence of a God and his parental authority; teach the pure and benevolent outlines of the Redeemer's character, and the great truths and hopes of the Gospel; and these instructions form essential links in the grand chain of memory, which no change of circumstances, nor lapse of time, nor combination of power can ever wholly strike out. They have their place assigned them; and, though they may be concealed, they cannot be obliterated. They may perhaps cease to exercise their appropriate influence, and not be recalled for years; the pressure of the

business and of the cares of life may have driven them out from every prominent position, and buried them for a time. But the period of their resurrection is always at hand, although it may not be possible for the limited knowledge of man to detect the signs of it. Perhaps, in the hour of temptation to crime, they come forth like forms and voices from the dead, and with more than their original freshness and power; perhaps, in the hour of misfortune, in the prison-house, or in the land of banishment, they pay their visitations, and impart a consolation which nothing else could have supplied; they come with the angel-tones of parental reproof and love, and preserve the purity, and check the despondency of the soul. (I.373)

Although it had been traditional in Protestantism generally speaking, and in American Puritanism to encourage parents to inculcate religious and moral values, this was traditionally done through the doctrinal specificities of catechism. Here Upham takes the broad approach, speaking to a variety of Protestants, encouraging the inculcation of the existence of “a God,” and focusing on the ethical elements of the gospel (e.g., the Redeemer’s character) rather than the doctrinal elements (e.g., the Redeemer’s work and “offices” as in Ames). Again, it was this broadly evangelical arrangement in American colleges that sustained the introspective psychology of the antebellum period. Yet, one should not interpret Upham as doctrinally indifferent: he closed his section on memory reminding his readers that “...the Scriptures plainly and explicitly teach that the Savior in the last day shall judge the world, and that all shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil.” Although some had questioned whether this judgment would be fair given defects in human memory, Upham’s psychology assured his readers that, on that day, the mind

“...will summon up thought and feeling from its hidden recesses, and will clearly present before us the perfect form and representation of the past” (I.374).

Internal Intellect: Reasoning

Having covered the auxiliary powers of association and memory, Upham then returns to the internal cognitive powers, this time to discuss the fourth and final cognitive power: reasoning. Knowledge of the powers of reasoning is derived from consciousness. Over and above the powers of intuition and judgment, reasoning is “...a new and distinct fountain of thought,” and “...sustains the higher office of bringing to light the great principles and hidden truths of nature” (I.376). Although an interesting section, Upham deals with volition in only the most superficial ways in this section.

Disordered Intellectual Action and the Will

Upham’s consideration of disordered intellectual action has little to do with the will. There are two brief points that may be made, however. In view of the influences of brain on mind, Upham argued that “....it seems to be certain that this part of the bodily system is connected, in a very intimate and high degree, with the exercises of the mind, particularly with perception and volition” (I.472). Upham’s belief that brain disorders are particularly harmful to volitional processes may refer back to his account of the seemingly paralyzing effects of having too much blood in the system. Upham thought that the importance of the brain in mental life had to do mostly with the proportionally high volume of blood processed there.

Upham’s distinction between partial insanity and total insanity is also instructive regarding volitional processes. Upham defined the term insanity broadly, meaning “...simply a want of soundness or want of health.” Its application to mental processes

was likewise exceedingly general, "...it indicates an unsound or disordered state of the mental action.' Yet, these unsound and disordered states of mind could vary a great deal. In the worst case, the disordered condition characterizes the entire mind, intellect, sensibilities, and will. Yet, some cases of "partial insanity" only affect certain "departments or subdivisions of departments." In this case, the mind is "...essentially free and undisturbed in some of its departments and in some of its modes of action." In this first volume of his Mental Philosophy, Upham proceeded to show how "insanity" can affect the subdepartments of the intellectual department of the mind. For example, he considers the insanity of the sensations, perceptions, and of consciousness. Given that cases of partial insanity include the retention of some of the faculties of the mind, Upham thought that partially insane people could still be held accountable for their actions. In cases of total insanity, that is, when, all of the faculties of the soul are perverted, Upham thought that mercy and understanding were in order. In total insanity, the afflicted person suffers from "...total disorganization," and "...a chaotic mingling together of the mental elements, without regard to law or order; perception, consciousness, association, memory, reasoning, all conflicting with themselves and with each other in one wild mass of irretrievable ruin" (I.490). Interestingly, in this section Upham has little to say about the will, indicating that he did not believe simple willpower to be the remedy of all ills of society.

The Appendix on Language

Upham concludes volume one with an appendix on language. Since thoughts and feelings are communicated through the means of language, and, therefore, language

contains important information about the mind, Upham offered a somewhat lengthy essay on the subject of language, which has little to do with the subject at hand.

Summary and Conclusion

In the preface of Mental Philosophy, Upham revealed himself to be very much within the tradition of Enlightenment and nonsectarianism which had come to characterize the American academy. Early on, he outlined some primary truths that would be both assumed and fundamental to the entire system. Sounding much like Edwards, Upham placed universal causation among these truths. Yet, sounding much like the Arminian psychologists that Edwards attempted to refute, Upham also argued strongly for the immateriality of the mind on the basis that any strict correspondence between brain and mind would make humans machines. The mind may have “laws” but these laws include the power of self-determination, which sets it apart from matter. Upham gave a superficial introduction to physiological considerations to show that for all intents and purposes physiology was irrelevant to psychology. Upham revealed a strong intellectualist bent in describing the laws of belief.

Upham argued that the classic dichotomous distinction of mental faculties (i.e., into will and intellect) was not in accord with the universal experience of humanity. Although justified on psychological grounds, Upham used a trichotomous psychology to free the will from a necessary connection to either intellect or emotion. Arminian sensibilities therefore drove the very shape of Upham’s psychology.

In addition to these prefatory materials, the majority of this chapter focused upon the content of the first volume of Upham’s two volume Mental Philosophy, which dealt with the topic of intellect. Although much of what Upham said in this volume is not

related to the related themes of will and determinism, much is relevant. Since Upham's psychology is systematic, building upon itself, this chapter therefore attempted to outline the contours of Upham's system while paying attention to the issues most relevant to the will, particularly the loss of will in American psychology.

Upham divided his consideration of the intellect into three parts: the external intellect, the internal intellect, and disordered intellectual activity. He concluded the first volume with an appendix on language. This chapter focused primarily on those aspects having to do with will or other considerations relevant to this thesis.

The external intellect has to do with the intellect's contact with the outside world. Although arguing that the origins of knowledge are external, Upham also passionately defended against the idea that knowledge can be reduced to external inputs since he wanted to think of the mind as a kind of nonsectarian repository for ultimate (i.e., non-observable, moral) truths. He discussed sensation in general, perception, and the senses, all of which I briefly summarize. Upham's science is clearly "doxological" (Bozeman, 1977) missing no opportunity to praise the creator for the wisdom and benevolence manifested in the human structure. Following the Scots, Upham decries idealism as leading necessarily to skepticism. The concern with skepticism may have been greater than his concern with materialism, which, as Guelzo (1989) pointed out, may have been a severe miscalculation on the part of Protestant scientists, given that materialism would be the threat to eventually destroy Protestant hegemony in American academic and intellectual life.

Upham also discusses habit in this context. Habit is a powerful force that applies to all aspects of mental life. A sure sign that things had changed considerably since

Edwards' day is the way that Upham *opposes* habit to volition. In Ames and Edwards, habits were a species of volition. Far from impeding volition and freedom, good habits were seen as the epitome of moral freedom, the very definition of a good will. Upham, embracing the "Arminian" assumptions of contemporary mental philosophy, however, thought that the "dignity" of will had to do with its contingency and self-determination. So, while Upham tended to look at habits in a generally positive light (and, predictably, praised God for the wisdom of habit), he also somewhat awkwardly attempted to find a place for volitions in seemingly automatic behavior. Whatever was "mechanical or automatic" was seen as necessarily opposed to volition. Therefore, the reach of habit (and other mechanical inputs) needed to be limited. The failure to limit the powers of determination over human action would be to "wrest" powers "from the control of the will." This fear that the will was losing territory would be even more evident in the psychology of William James.

Upham closed his discussion of external intellect by considering conception, abstraction, simple vs. complex thoughts, abstraction, attention, and dreaming/somnambulism. Several aspects of Upham's analysis are worth mentioning here. First, Upham made a distinction between simple and complex thoughts. Simple thoughts, unpolluted through the combinations of the human mind, were considered objects of knowledge. Complex ideas do not lead to certain knowledge. This is relevant to the topic of will only in that the acts of the will, unlike the acts of the intellect and sensibility, are always simple. Therefore Upham could be assured that his introspections on the topic of volition would be trustworthy, a sentiment problematized by Edwards who had a century earlier briefly called attention to the fact that introspective reports may

contradict one another. The distinction between simple and complex ideas also served as a foundation for mental science. Although we cannot know what “lies back of phenomena,” we can know enough to put morality and even religion on a firm nonsectarian foundation.

Second, Upham’s consideration of attention offers some initial insights into his psychology of will, particularly the distinction between desire and choice. Finally, his treatment of dreaming sheds further light upon Upham’s understanding of will, i.e., as the faculty by which we exert control over the self.

The second major section of Upham’s discussion of the intellect was concerned with “internal intellect,” which gives knowledge of the non-material, “super-sensational” world. The internal intellect is divided into four “Cognitive principles,” intuition, consciousness, judgment and reasoning. His comments on intuition are most relevant to the subject at hand. Intuition, Upham explained, gives knowledge of “elementary truths.” For example, the intuition goes beyond the mere data of sense and offers the notions of right and wrong. The intuition also reveals to us the idea of “power,” first of divine power which created all things in wisdom, and secondly of human power. The notion of human power gets to the crux of the Arminian impulse: the desire to somehow rise above normal human limitation by one’s own strength. The intuition, then, like a non-sectarian textbook (because accessible to all minds) supported the Arminian impulses of Thomas Upham. The mind “possesses” power in itself, “an amount of real efficiency suited to the limited, sphere which Providence has allotted him” (I.274). Whereas both Ames and Upham thought of efficiency as derivative, Upham seemed to conceive of it as a human possession which now exists autonomously and can be utilized apart from God, for good

or evil. Moral accountability in the Arminian mind depended upon having a power that God would not tamper with.

Consciousness provides knowledge of internal states. The only thing remarkable about Upham's treatment of this topic is his lack of consideration of the role of bias in introspection. Edwards had challenged Arminian introspections concerning the will, claiming that he had no experience of self-determined and contingent freedom. Upham predictably does not address the possibility of self-deception here.

Finally, Upham also described the powers of association by which "our thoughts and feelings follow each other in a regular train." True to his Arminian impulses, Upham was concerned with the power that the will exerts over this otherwise deterministic process. Upham assured his readers that the will's influence can be "considerable" in this regard.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SPRINGS OF ACTION, BACK OF THE INTELLECT

This chapter is a commentary and analysis of roughly the first two-thirds of the second volume of Upham's (1869) Mental Philosophy, which deals with the faculty of the sensibilities. Although not entirely original in his separation of the soul into three (as opposed to two) faculties (Upham had, for example, given credit to the American minister Asa Burton for preceding him on this), Upham's division was the one that stuck. Throughout the nineteenth century, following Upham's groundbreaking treatment in 1834, the tripartite division would be hailed as the long-awaited answer to Edwards' dominance on the question of the freedom of the will (see, e.g., Mahan, 1846). Since it was "the sensibilities" that were removed from the domain of the will in the tripartite division, Upham's treatment of the same is of particular relevance to the question regarding the loss of will in American psychology.

One immediate and obvious implication of Upham's maneuver was that the psychological territory assigned to the will shrank. Indeed, if the sensibilities used to be part of "the will," and two-thirds of volume two (which dealt with sensibilities and will) consisted of an analysis of the faculty of the *sensibilities*, one might even be tempted to say that the will was less than half the faculty it used to be. But for Upham and other 'Arminian' psychologists the tripartite division was no laughing matter. His sober intention was to *elevate* and even *save* the faculty of will. The end result, however, may have been to render it largely irrelevant.

The Importance of the Sentiments

Concerning the validity of making a distinction between the intellectual powers and the sentimentive, Upham reiterated some of his arguments from the Introduction, including the universal “structure of languages” and the testimony of consciousness. The activity of the sentiments depends upon the activity of the intellect: “as a general thing, there is and can be no movement of the sensibilities, no such thing as an emotion, desire, or feeling of moral obligation, without an antecedent action of the intellect” (II.25-26). At the very least, the intellect must first specify an object for the sentiments to react to. More than that, the intellect’s provision of more particular and sophisticated views of objects lead to deeper feeling.

Although the intellect is a wonderful creation of God, it is incomplete without the sentiments. If humankind “had been formed of intellect only, of cold and unimpassioned perceptivity; if he could merely have perceived, compared, associated, and reasoned, without a solitary emotion or desire, without any of the various affections of our nature, without sorrow for suffering or sympathy in joy; in a word, if he had been all head and no heart, the human soul would have shown not only a different, but a depressed and inferior aspect, compared with what it does at present” (II.26). More than that, the sensibilities are “...the secrets of men’s actions” (II.27), the necessary but not sufficient condition of voluntary activity. Somewhat surprisingly, Upham thought that human beings are best understood as affective rather than rational creatures:

A knowledge of human nature, in the common apprehension of the phrase, does not so much imply a knowledge of the powers of perception and reasoning as a

knowledge of the springs of action, back of the intellect, which, in the shape of the emotions and passions, give an impulse and a character to the conduct both of individuals and communities. In other words, a knowledge of human nature is essentially a knowledge of the HEART... (I.27)

Given the priority of the intellect, however (i.e., the sentiments are in “back of the intellect”), Upham did not go so far as to claim that the sentiments were more important than the intellect, but rather saw the two “departments” as equally worthy of careful attention.

Unlike the cool and controlled operations of intellect, the careful observation of the sentiments is complicated because the inherent “excitement” of the sensibilities “...seems...inconsistent...with that calm and critical examination which is desirable” (II.28) in sound mental philosophy. Although a difficult situation, Upham did not believe it to be insurmountable, particularly if the mental philosopher relied upon memory of the workings of the sentimentive nature rather than “direct consciousness” (II.28).

“Arminian” Classification of the Sensibilities

Upham divided the sensibilities into two subdivisions, “...the great divisions of the Natural or Pathematic [Upham borrowed the term “pathematic” from Sir James Mackintosh], and the Moral,” or the difference between heart and conscience. These subdivisions are separate but often run parallel with each other. The natural or pathematic sensibilities are “first in the order of time” (II.31) because they provided the basis for the moral sensibilities. The natural sensibilities also are “...the great seat of the motives of men’s actions, and consequently furnishes a principal field of operations for the conscience to act upon” (II.31). More specifically, the natural sensibilities provide

...a large portion of the subjects which it is the business of our moral constitution to act upon, scrutinize, and judge.” Still, Upham saw the development of the moral and natural sensibilities as occurring simultaneously (i.e., in” parallel” fashion), and therefore have a relation similar to that between the external and internal intellect.

It is worth noting that Upham’s familiar sounding distinction between what is natural and what is moral is reminiscent of Edwards’ contrast between natural and moral necessity. Recall that in Edwards’ thought natural and moral necessity depended upon natural and moral *causes*. Moral causes were, in brief, the manifold psychological phenomena associated with the will. Inclinations, desires, liking, disliking, loving, hating. Natural causes were, in brief, everything that stood outside of the will and could thwart the purposes of the will. Actions caused by moral causes are culpable, actions caused by natural causes are not. In Upham’s thought, the first thing to notice is that the entire domain of “the sensibilities” would have fallen under Edwards’ notion of moral causes. The fact that some of these “moral causes” may be operative in animals was immaterial. The inclinations in humans were of a different sort than the inclinations of animals because human beings possess are “moral agents,” made in the image of God and possessed of a “moral sense” which gives them a sense of right and wrong. Yet, it is the inclinations which are classified as moral and serve as the springs to action.

For Upham, the inclinations (emotions and desires) are classified as “natural.” Yet, since the “moral” sensibilities (i.e., the conscience) stand in judgment of the natural sensibilities, Upham clearly thought there was a moral element to the natural sensibilities. It would not be possible for the conscience to render a moral judgment of the natural sensibilities if this were not the case. The distinction, therefore, is peculiar and a bit

forced. As we shall see, however, this distinction was a crucial part of Upham's Arminian psychology. This Arminian psychology came at a cost, however, by narrowing the sphere of human impulses that can be considered "moral." In Edwards' universe, all impulses, including fleshly and earthly ones, were moral because man is the *imago dei*. In Upham, the moral status of impulses is brought into question because the fleshly and earthly ones seemed too similar to the rest of the earthly world—impulses that were fine for animals, but hindrances to those who would aspire to be gods.

Another way of understanding the difference between the moral and natural sensibilities is that they have different objects:

The one considers objects: chiefly as they have a relation to ourselves; the other, as they relate to all possible existences. The one looks at things in the aspect of their desirableness; the other fixes its eye on the sublime feature of their rectitude.

The one asks what is GOOD; the other what is RIGHT. (II.32)

So the distinction between natural and moral sensibilities has to do with the difference between feeling that an object is desirable and feeling that it is morally right. By virtue of the "moral nature" of humans, they are enabled "...to act with exclusive reference to God, his fellow-men, and the universe" (II.33). Not surprisingly, then, the moral sentiments are one of the chief distinctions between brute and man. Animals have natural sensibilities just as humans [this contention is problematized by considering the sentiments Upham places under "natural," many of which seem unique to humans], but, since humans also have a sense of their moral duties, they are not constrained to follow pleasures only. The moral sentiments can therefore be considered to be worthy of greater honor than the natural. From a Calvinistic perspective, however, the implications of this

construction were undesirable. Calvinism argued that human beings ought to consider God their chief good. Upham seems to be saying that it is better to consider God right than to love him as one's chief good.

Upham divided the natural sensibilities into the emotions and desires, and argued that the former precedes the latter. Emotions "...are exceedingly numerous and various," and have to do with being pleased or displeased with a particular object. Desires translate these emotions into a want to possess. The need for this two-step process seemed quite obvious to Upham—after all, "to desire a thing which utterly fails to excite within us the least emotion of pleasure seems to be...impossible, from the nature of things, under any conceivable circumstances" (II.35-36).

The moral sensibilities have a division analogous to that of the natural or pathematic sensibilities. First are the moral emotions which are feelings of approval or disapproval, followed by feelings of obligation, or the desire to do the right thing.

The Natural Sensibilities

The Natural Sensibilities: Emotions

Concerning the general nature of the emotions, Upham understandably thought it "...extremely difficult to explain by words what their precise nature is," although "we do not suppose...that any one is ignorant of what is meant when we have occasion to speak of an emotion" (II.39). This inability to verbally describe an emotion is due to the fact that they are in themselves "truly simple" (i.e., without parts) and definitions necessarily break up the thing defined into parts. Given the simple nature of emotion, the mental philosopher's best access to emotions is through consciousness.

Nevertheless, it is possible to deepen our understanding of emotions by

considering “circumstances” which “...throw an indirect light on them” (I.40). The order in which emotions appear in consciousness is such an example. Emotions (natural and moral) follow intellections and precede desires or feelings of moral obligation.

Upham was aware that some might find his manner of subdividing the sensibilities either erroneous or pedantic, or both. As if to confront this objection at an early stage, Upham affirmed, “These divisions we hold to be fundamental.” Forgoing these careful distinctions could lead to serious misunderstandings of human nature. Upham’s example of this focuses on volition: “important points...in the doctrine of the Will, will be found to depend upon distinctions which are asserted to exist in the sensibilities” (II.44). Given that Upham’s explication of the sentiments is carried out with a concern for volition, it is important to carefully consider this explication.

Given the great variety of emotions, Upham selected only a few for detailed analysis. The first emotions he chose to consider were the aesthetic—the emotions of beauty or taste. Emotions of beauty are always pleasing, and refer always to something external. We consider certain objects beautiful because they excite “...within us pleasant emotions, which, in the circumstances of the case, we cannot well ascribe to any other cause” (II.46). Although this psychological definition of a beautiful object might seem to lead in the direction of denying the reality of objective beauty, Upham did “not feel at liberty” (II.47) to make such a bold contention, but rather believed that God had designed a correspondence (or a “mutual adaptation,” II.52) between the mind and beauty such that we are able to appreciate the beauty that exists in nature, in art, etc. Upham entered into a consideration of the objects that bring about emotions of beauty. Certain material objects, “...such as woods, waters, cultivated fields, and the visible firmament” (II.50)

excite these emotions, as do artistic representations of beautiful material objects. Not only do material objects arouse a sense of beauty, but so too do certain “intellectual and moral objects” (II.51). Whenever we encounter “...intelligence, wisdom, truth, honour, magnanimity, benevolence, justice, or other traits of a mind acting as it was created and designed to act,” emotions of beauty are created. “Moral traits” (I.51) are also revealed through the relief of the poor and the defense of the weak, and these similarly awaken emotions of beauty. Upham recognized that people differ in their abilities to experience these emotions, but, since his tendency throughout the work is to focus on universals, he spent a good deal of time dealing with universally beautiful forms, such as the circle, and other things which generally bring about aesthetic emotions, such as certain colors and sounds.

Upham closed his chapter on aesthetic emotion asserting that “...in the present life intellectual and moral objects are brought before our contemplation only in a comparatively small degree, surrounded and almost encumbered, as we are, with material things” (I.74). Among these intellectual and moral objects is the most “pleasing and even enrapturing” object that one can contemplate, “...the Supreme Being.” True to his Protestant roots, Upham argued that when God is considered “...we do not contemplate an outward and accessible picture, or a statue of wood and stone, but merely a complex internal conception, which embraces certain intellectual and moral qualities and powers, and excludes everything of a purely material kind” (II.74-75). The contemplation of “...infinite wisdom, of infinite benevolence, of unsearchable power and justice...” brings great delight to the mind.

Although the preceding summary of Upham’s consideration of the objects which

are associated with aesthetic emotions is not directly related to volition, it is nevertheless indirectly related. As we saw in the writings of Ames and Edwards, the psychology of volition was always closely associated with objects, usually moral ones, most typically God. Here too we find that Upham is able to *name* several moral objects. We find that this had changed considerably in William James.

Upham turned next to “associated beauty,” or the way objects become beautiful (or more beautiful) by being associated with *inherently* beautiful objects. Examples include songs and colors that are especially meaningful to particular peoples. He treated “emotions of sublimity,” which do not differ from other emotions of beauty in kind but in degree. The progression is from the “gentle and pleasant” feelings typical of general emotions of beauty to the “powerful and even painful” emotions of sublimity (I.91).

This topic is also related to the difficulty of “naming the object.” Upham believed that some objects were capable of producing such sublime emotions. For example, some objects are “...characterized by vast extent or expansion; in other words, by the attribute of mere horizontal amplitude.” For this reason, it was fitting that “...Mr. Stewart makes a remark to this effect, that a Scotchman, who had never witnessed anything of the kind before, would experience an emotion approaching to sublimity on beholding for the first time the vast plains of Salisbury and Yorkshire in England” (II.92). The ocean is “one of the most sublime objects” (II.93) that can be contemplated. Great height, great depth, a lion’s roar, a choir, the trumpet, power, etc. are all examples of sublime objects. Likewise, heroic moral action is a sublime object:

The man who, in support of some great moral or religious principle, not only surrenders his property, but calmly and triumphantly sacrifices his life, is, in the

highest sense, a sublime object of contemplation. (I.98)

In the midst of his discussion of the emotions of sublimity, Upham also introduced another category used to describe emotions based upon objects which are too full and expansive to be called objects of beauty, yet not full and expansive enough to be called sublime. These objects produce “*emotions of grandeur*” (I.100). “The meandering river is beautiful; as it becomes deeper and wider, it assumes an appearance, not of mere beauty, but of grandeur; but the ocean only is more than either, is sublime.”

Upham was careful to guard against the supposition that emotions of sublimity are merely subjective states with no correspondence to reality. “We have good reason to believe that the Creative principle of the universe, who gave birth in the mind to the faculty or susceptibility of these emotions, has also established certain objects, and certain forms and conditions of objects as antecedent, by a fixed and original law of correspondence, to THE SUBLIME within us” (I.101).

A characteristic that separates Upham’s treatment from Ames, is that Ames’s text is an in-depth contemplation upon the ultimate Object of the universe, and a consideration of how human subjects are to react to that being. Upham spoke of God in more general terms than Ames, and was interested in how a variety of meaningful and even sublime objects influence the soul. This difference touches upon some significant differences between a sectarian and nonsectarian approach to psychology. The God-centered approach of Puritan sectarianism was perhaps quite narrow compared to the world-affirming psychology of Thomas Upham. Not only is Upham capable of admiring God, but he also stands in awe of oceans and works of art. Yet, while both psychologies were dependent upon culturally-accepted norms, only one psychology was based upon a

culture with mechanisms which could sustain these norms. While Ames carefully described the theological and institutional requirements for the propagation of the gospel, Upham attempted to secure his moral world on the shifting sand of consciousness.

Another topic related to the “object” is Upham’s consideration of “Taste,” which he defined as the “...the power of judging of the beauty or deformity of objects, founded on the experience of emotions, particularly those of beauty, grandeur, and sublimity” (II.105). This was a bit of a digression for Upham since he considered taste to be an intellectual rather than an emotional power. Taste “...sit[s] in judgment on emotions...” (II.106). Although all people have the raw equipment to develop taste, only a few actually develop it. If one desires to become a “...man of taste,” it is necessary to undergo “...a course of training and discipline,” which includes the examination of the “...emotions which are excited in his own bosom,” and a comparison of these emotions to those of others (II.107).

Considering the question of the “permanency of beauty,” Upham asked “...whether we are to regard beauty as truly real and permanent, or as accidental and transitory.” Upham was convinced that beauty (i.e., non-associated beauty) “...has its foundation in nature, possesses its fixed causes and relations, and may justly be regarded, in respect to the human mind at least, as something permanent” (II.109). To prove the point, Upham referred to the fact that “...beauty in the first instance is original, and not associated.” If this were not the case, our conceptions of beauty would change rapidly. Secondly, notions of beauty have remained fairly consistent “...from the beginning of time down to the present hour” (II.110). A twenty-first century reader of these arguments will likely read them with a degree of skepticism, an indication that the “foundations”

which Upham was laying were not nearly as secure as he had originally thought.

Upham closed his section on the emotions with a chapter on the emotions of the ludicrous, which are based upon "...our perception of some incongruity in the person or thing which is the cause of [the emotion]" (II.111), and on "other simple emotions." The chapter on other simple emotions briefly focused upon feelings which were "not less important," but which are not generally difficult to explain. Cheerfulness, joy, gladness, melancholy, sorrow, grief, surprise, astonishment, wonder, dissatisfaction, displeasure, disgust, diffidence, modesty, shame, regard, reverence and adoration are all given a brief description. Adoration involves an object "...without weakness and possessed of every possible perfection." This emotion is properly ascribed only to "the Supreme Being." His description of this object is helpful once again to gain insight into the religious element of Upham's thought:

The wisdom of the wisest men is often perplexed with errors; the goodness of the best of men is marred by occasional infirmities; how much deeper, therefore, and purer, and more elevated will be our sentiments of veneration, when directed towards Him whose wisdom never fails, and who is not only just and kind in his administrations, but the original and inexhaustible source of beneficence and rectitude! (I.124)

Upham concluded this section by reminding his readers that his treatment of the emotions was not intended to be exhaustive.

The Natural Sensibilities: Desires

The second aspect of the natural sensibilities that Upham discussed was desire. Desire, like emotion, is a simple state of mind and therefore resists definition and can be

known only through consciousness. Yet, as was the case in his consideration of emotion, Upham turned to the “circumstances” which surround desires to shed light upon the topic.

One primary reason Upham thought that a careful consideration of desire was important was that it is closely related to the topic of will. Desires never follow intellections immediately, but are always preceded by emotions, i.e., mental states which predicate a degree of pleasantness or unpleasantness to the object. Upham thought it a “fixed law of the mind” that “...no man ever desired an object, or could by any possibility desire it, in regard to which he had experienced no emotion, but had always been in a state of perfect indifferency” (II.129). Upham’s rejection of indifference as a spring of action is certainly reminiscent of Edwards. Yet, as we see, Upham thought of desires (or motives) much as Chubb had: in a way that Edwards found incomprehensible: motives only potentially but not infallibly move the will. At this point Upham offered a brief summary of his entire psychological system which is worth quoting simply for that reason:

The general division of the Mind, it will be recollected, is into the Intellect, the Sensibilities, and the Will. The External or Sensuous Intellect is first brought into action; followed, in greater or less proximity of time, by the development of the Internal or Super-sensuous. The subsequent process of the mental action, when carried through in the direction of the Natural or Pathematic sensibilities, is from intellections to emotions, and from emotions to desires, and from desires to acts of the will. When carried through in the direction of the Moral sensibilities, it is from intellections to emotions (not natural, but moral emotions); and then, diverging into a different track, and avoiding the appropriate domain of the

Desires, passes from emotions to feelings of moral obligation, and from the Obligatory feelings, like the corresponding portion of the sensibilities, to the region of the Voluntary or Volitional nature. (II.130)

The only exception to this pattern is that of instinctive action which appears at times to take place without emotion.

Desires also "...always have an object," usually "...a distinct and well defined one" (II.132). The relation between desire and the object of desire is quite close. "The desires lean upon the object which they have in view as a sort of pillar of support; they may be said, with strict truth at the bottom of the expression, to cling around it, as the vine encircles and rests itself upon the elm." This is different from emotions that are less stable and move more quickly from object to object. There is also a hedonic element to desire: the attainment of the object desired is accompanied with pleasure. Desires vary in intensity, and are made more intense indirectly through more distinct and clear conceptions, which have an influence on the emotions.

The characteristic of desire most relevant to the topic of volition is that it is "as Mr. Hobbes would term it, a *motive* state of the mind." The existence of desire increases the probability of motion, and places the mental and bodily faculties "in the attitude of movement." Here Upham again provides a glimpse into the multi-step psychology of volition that he will expound. In order for desire to actually produce movement, a "more remote" power of the mind "...must be consulted...", that is, the Will. "If the Will decidedly opposes the desire, its tendency is, of course, frustrated in the object aimed at." Nevertheless, the "tendency" of the desire towards its object remains even after the will squelches its expression.

This tendency toward action is unique to the desires (and, in the case of the moral sensibilities, the feelings of moral obligation). Intellectual states and emotional states do not have this characteristic. If intellect existed apart from desire, human beings would be reduced to "...being[s] of speculation merely." Likewise, if emotion existed apart from desire, human nature "...would be like a ship anchored in the centre of the ocean, agitated, and thrown up and down on the rising and falling billows, but wholly incapable of any movement in latitude or longitude" (II.134). The only thing that keeps desire from expressing itself is the will, which acts like a doorkeeper. "It is the office of the Will, as a separate and relatively a higher part of our nature, to act in reference to this tendency, either in checking or aiding, in annulling or consummating it" (II.134).

These are the basic characteristics of desire, and Upham conceded that the discussion could be concluded at that point were it not for the fact that desire is "subject to many modifications" (II.135). Upham argued that there are four basic variations of desire in the human experience: Instincts, Appetites, the Propensities, and the Affections, and spend the vast majority of his time on this topic analyzing each of these topics. With the exception of the instincts, Upham believed that each of these desires can exist in instinctive and in voluntary forms. When "inquiry and reflection" are not possible, the desires take on an instinctive quality, as we shall see. Upham thought this was significant when considering the mind from "a moral point of view" (II.136).

The Varieties of Desire: Instincts. Instincts are desires "...existing under a particular and definite modification." More specifically, instincts "...are fixed or invariable tendencies to do certain things, without previous forethought and deliberation" (II.136). They exist in human, but to a lesser extent than in animals. This is part of

God's design in nature. The lower animals lack reason, but "the provident oversight of the Supreme Being, without whose notice not a sparrow falleth to the ground, has met this deficiency by endowing them with instincts, the most various in kind, and strikingly adapted to the exigencies of their situation." Examples of this are found in bird nests, beaver houses, migrational patterns and "...in a multitude of other instances" (II.137). Although the topic of animal instincts is a "...one of exceeding interest both to the philosopher and the Christian," Upham thought the topic was off-topic given that instinct does not play a large role in human activity. Still, humans do have instincts. For example, respiration, sucking and swallowing, and the desire for self-preservation are all instinctual. Although Upham thought that over-emphasis on instincts in human beings "undoubtedly" could be carried "too far" (II.142), he saw these things as God-given adaptations. Although less admirable than other characteristics of human nature, their usefulness was great. They were designed to "...protect us in those cases where reason cannot come seasonably to our aid," and are therefore a "...necessary part of our constitution" (II.143).

The Varieties of Desire: Appetites. Next up the ladder of desires are appetites, the primary examples being hunger and thirst. Consistent with Victorian propriety, sex is not even mentioned as an appetite. These desires are found in man and brute and "...take their rise from the body," are occasional (i.e., not constant) in their appearance, and are accompanied with uneasiness. Appetites, like instincts, are God-given and therefore cannot be considered selfish or morally wrong, although they are susceptible to being misused. Prolonged gratification of an appetite can lead to "slavery." Upham quoted Dugald Stewart to this effect: "In proportion as this passion is gratified, its influence over

the conduct becomes the more irresistible (for all the active determinations of our nature are strengthened by habit), till at last we struggle in vain against its tyranny. A man so enslaved by his animal appetites exhibits humanity in one of its most miserable and contemptible forms” (II.146). The moral import of the appetites is magnified by the fact that “artificial” appetites can be developed through the immoderate consumption of things such as tobacco, opium, and “inebriating liquors.”

Appetites can also be instinctive or voluntary. When an object is pursued as an ultimate end, the impulse to that object can be considered instinctive. But when an object is pursued not as an end itself, but for the pleasure that accompanies the object, the appetite can then be considered voluntary. Although this pursuit of pleasure can lead to “turbulent and violent” appetites, Upham thought that “...we may avail ourselves of the aid of other principles of the mind to subject them to a degree of restraint, to regulate, and, in a certain sense, to cultivate them.” This ability renders these appetites voluntary. As merely instinctual desires, appetites are neither good nor bad, but are simply adaptive. “It is only so far as they are voluntary, so far as they can be reached and controlled by the will, that they can by any possibility be morally good or evil, virtuous or vicious.” Only those “exercises...which are subordinate to the influence of the will” can be considered moral exercises (II.148).

The Varieties of Desire: Propensities. The Propensities come next in the hierarchy of desires. Upham did not attempt to define the propensities, but began to simply list examples. His first example is the propensity for self-preservation, or “the desire for continuance of existence” (I.149). The exercise of this propensity can be either instinctive (e.g., protecting oneself against a sudden and unexpected fall) or voluntary

(i.e., when done with deliberation). As long as the exercises of self-preservation do not violate “an unperverted conscience,” they are “always morally good” (II.151).

Curiosity, or the love of knowledge is another propensity Upham considered from a moral point of view, determining when its exercises are instinctive and when voluntary. Imitativeness, approbateness (the desire for esteem), and acquisitiveness (the desire to possess) are discussed. The discussion of acquisitiveness advocates private ownership: “What sin can there possibly be in desire to expand the range of that existence...provided it be done with a suitable regard to the relations and the claims of all other beings! So far from being a sin, it is a duty” (I.163). The desire to possess can become “inordinately strong,” and must be controlled. Similarly, the propensity and desire for power is morally good unless it becomes inordinately strong:

If it [the desire for power] be kept in subordination to the dictates of an enlightened conscience, and to the feelings and duties we owe to the Supreme Being, its exercise is virtuous. If, on the contrary, it acquires inordinate strength, as it is very likely to do, and is excessive in its operation, pushing us forward to the pursuit of forbidden objects and the invasion of others’ rights, it then becomes vicious. (II.167)

Upham’s consideration of the propensity to “utter the truth,” is telling on a theological level. Truth telling is human nature, there is “....abundant reason to regard as original or connatural to the mind.” Lying, on the other hand, is “against nature,” and violates the very “...structure of the Pathematic...[and] the Moral Sensibilities.” A person deliberately lying goes against “...the natural current of the Desires.” Exceptions to this rule are rare. Upham listed two cases in which lying become more common.

First, when the impulse to tell the truth is "...perverted by the influence of evil example or some other unfavourable cause;" and second, when there is some "...original mental malformation." Upham thought that the consequences of lying were quite serious, since "...the utterance of a very few falsehoods will be likely to destroy...[a person's] reputation forever" (II.168).

This passage is very clearly a departure from the notions of human sinfulness held by Ames and Edwards. Ames, like all theologians, thought that the Decalogue was still morally binding, including the command against lying. Yet, far from being the "natural current of the Desires," Ames thought that disobedience to the ninth commandment was the norm rather than the exception. As such, Upham appears as a kind of pathologizer of sin, one who sees sin as applying to a few sorry individuals, but not himself.

Further, Upham's distinction between instinctive and voluntary truth-telling is also very helpful in distinguishing his psychology from the Puritan model that prevailed in the texts of Ames and Edwards. In the case of instinctive truth-telling a person simply utters the truth, as they do "a thousand times a day...without stopping to reflect whether it is a matter of duty..." This is not a morally virtuous action. When a person is tempted lie, however, "...an effort of the Will..." is made to "check" the evil impulse. This checking actually runs counter to the desire to lie, and is based upon "the mere dictates of conscience" (II.169). Only in this case is the action meritorious.

It may be recalled that Edwards' understanding of the case was exactly opposite. It is more virtuous to tell the truth without any inclination to lie than with such an inclination. Further, Edwards thought that it would be impossible to resist the temptation to lie if it indeed were the strongest motive. Upham's comment about "the mere dictates

of conscience” sheds light on a crucial distinction here. For Edwards, motives were like weights in a balance: the balance will tip to the side with the most weight. Upham’s ingenious if implausible solution was to make a rigid distinction between types of motives: natural and moral motives. The “mere dictates of conscience” in Upham’s psychology were, in actuality, not “mere” at all. Rather, since they remained unscathed and unmixed by the natural desires, they could usually provide a way out of a tempting situation.

Such a partitioning of the motives would seem implausible in the era of the New Psychology, given its desire to refer mental states to the nervous system. Since there is no indication that there are two completely independent types of motives, Upham’s Arminian psychology would eventually fall.

Upham also briefly mentioned the propensity to self-love, or “...the desire of enjoyment or happiness,” which he considered to be as natural as the desire for knowledge or the esteem of others. This powerful motive causes people to plan for the future, and to flee from danger. Even Scripture sanctions the pursuit of happiness in God. When self-love is perverted it is called selfishness, and “...is always sinful, as existing in violation of what is due to others, and at variance with the will of God” (I.171). Upham summarized, “self-love is the principle which a holy God has given; selfishness is the loathsome superstructure which man, in the moments of his rebellion and sin, has erected upon it.” The fact that human sinfulness is confined to “moments” is another indication that Upham’s view of human nature was worlds away from that of Edwards and Ames.

Selfishness is an inordinate manifestation of self-love, and, manifests itself in “pride, vanity, and arrogance.” For example, pride is “...a desire that others...should be

made sensible of what we suppose to be our superiority” (I.172).

Upham’s final propensity, “the desire for society,” or sociality, likewise illustrates some of the important theological differences between Upham and his Puritan forebears, differences which are all highly relevant to the shape of Upham’s psychology and to the plausibility of his psychology in the late nineteenth century. Further, the political motivations in this section reveal that Upham was indeed a public philosopher, interested in maintaining the belief that democracy is not only a feasible system of government, but also one that is *required* by human nature itself.

Upham thought that sociality was a subject worthy of careful consideration because of its great importance. Upham argued that people have “...a desire of the company or society of their fellow-men” (II.175). He took objection to calling this desire “selfism” because the propensity to society is as an ultimate end, rather than something that is pursued for the pleasure that accompanies it. True enough, pleasure accompanies the satisfaction of this desire (as is the case in all desires), but this pleasure is not the end of the desire in its pure form. Upham apparently thought that this propensity typically remained pure, but that it could turn into a selfish desire when perverted. Not surprisingly, Upham took exception to the view of Thomas Hobbes, who thought that human beings do not enjoy one another’s company and live in society simply because the cost of living alone is too high. To the contrary, Upham thought “...the general rule...is, that man is a social being, seeking and delighting in the society of his fellow-men” (II.177). Upham had theological motivations for upholding this doctrine. If humans are not social creatures, then one could impugn the Creator:

If he be destitute of this principle, it may be said, with no small degree of

plausibility, that he is not fitted with entire wisdom to those circumstances in which he is actually placed. But this state of things would obviously be at variance with the analogy of nature in other cases, and would seem to imply not only a deficiency of wisdom, but a want of goodness also in the Supreme Being. (II.177)

Just as “the wing of the bird is precisely adapted to the air,” so too is man well adapted to the social situation in which he is found. If, on the contrary, human beings are actually repulsed by one another, society would be “scatter[ed]...in a thousand directions!” (II.178). After providing proof after proof of humanity’s social nature, Upham returned to “...the strange notion of Hobbes...that man is kept in society only by the fear of what he significantly calls the Leviathan; that is to say, of Civil Society in the exercise of force” (II.190). Although the civil government has a role, the true foundations of society are to be found in the human propensity for society. Interestingly, and appropriately, Upham concluded his chapter on the love of society, and the section on the propensities, with a brief consideration of hope. When we believe that the thing that we desire is attainable, we have a “pleasant emotion” and a “glow of happiness.” Perhaps Upham’s strong resistance to Hobbes’ notions was in the interests of preserving hope in the American way (Delbanco, 1999).

The Varieties of Desire: Affections. For Upham, the affections held the highest place among the natural sensibilities. The hierarchy of our sensibilities is rooted in consciousness. “It may be difficult to explain how it happens, but it is unquestionably the fact, that there is a difference in the sentiments of esteem with which we contemplate different parts of our nature; some being regarded with higher, and some with less

honour” (II.193). Upham again felt entirely comfortable utilizing the universal “we” as a foundation for his moral views.

Generally speaking, following Kames, affections are emotions accompanied with desire. Yet the affections can be divided into two major subgroups, the malevolent and benevolent. Upham began his analysis of affections with the malevolent type.

Malevolent affections generally “...include a painful emotion, accompanied with a desire of evil to the unpleasant object.” By way of contrast, benevolent affections are generally characterized by pleasant emotions “...accompanied with a desire of good to the pleasing object.” The term “passions” can be considered with affections thus understood.

“Resentment or Anger” is the foundational malevolent affection. Anger is composed of an unpleasant feeling “...accompanied with the desire of inflicting unpleasantness or pain on the object towards which it is directed” (II.194). Resentment or anger can be instinctive, occurring “without thought” (II.195). This form of character is neither morally good or evil and is, like the other instinctive reactions, implanted in us by the Creator for our protection. The fact that instinct occur without thought is the key to their amorality. Only acts which originate in the intellect can be considered moral: “It is the glory of the moral nature that it lays back, if we may be allowed the expressions, of the intellective nature; and that it does not and cannot act, independently of the antecedent action, to a greater or less extent, of the intellect” (II.196). Upham here leans in an intellectualist direction, since the work of the intellect in moral acts goes beyond mere specification of an object. Instead the “...perceptive and comparing acts of the intellect” are always involved in moral action.

Voluntary or “deliberate” anger or resentment is opposed to the instinctive

variety. In instinctive anger the final cause (i.e., the object) of the anger is protection. In voluntary anger the final cause is "...not only protection, but justice." Only this retributive form of anger can be judged from a moral point of view. Upham thought that resentment could be justified morally on natural (as opposed to Scriptural) grounds, but that this affection "is particularly liable to a perverted and excessive action" (II.197-198). Upham argued that "nature...herself instituted some checks on the undue exercise of this passion" (II.198). For example, the feeling of resentment is painful and unpleasant. Secondly, resentment contradicts our natural desire for the esteem of others, and third, it contradicts our desire to esteem ourselves. Upham thought the outward expression of anger was most unbecoming: "the mere outward signs of the angry passions give a shock to our sensibilities, and are hateful to us, while those of an opposite character beam upon the soul with the pleasantness of a tranquil morning's light" (II.199). Not able to constrain himself to nature's helps, Upham also turned to "reason and Scripture" to further assist his reader in conquering resentment. The passion of anger prevents a person from reasoning correctly, leads us to incorrectly impute vicious motives to others, and offends "the Supreme Being." Indeed, the consideration of one's own sinfulness should prevent taking inordinate offense:

If we ourselves were without sin, if we could boast of perfect purity of character, there might seem to be some degree of reasonableness in our exacting from others the full amount of what is due to perfect and inflexible rectitude. But the actual state of things is far different from this. Every one who knows his own heart must see and feel himself to be a transgressor. How unsuitably, therefore, to the circumstances of his own situation does that man conduct, who talks largely of

satisfaction and revenge, when he is every moment dependent on the clemency and forgiveness of a Being whom he has himself so often sinned against. (II.200)

Given Upham's tendency to stress the general innocence of human nature and the general ability of human beings to live moral lives, this comment is indeed surprising. It is an illustration, perhaps, of the awkward task of reconciling two incompatible approaches to human nature: the Reformed Protestant and the Enlightened. To be fair, Upham most probably did not see any contradiction in his assumptions.

These considerations gave Upham an opportunity to exult in the superiority of "the Christian Code," since the command to love our enemies is "...one of the great and striking characteristics of the Gospel revelation," which "obviously" sets the gospel apart from "every other" code. Upham, continuing in this strain, offers a rare acknowledgement of the exclusivity implied in this explicitly Christian morality. "But it is to be remembered," Upham reminded his readers, that the commands of Christ "...are addressed to his own followers." Sounding now like William Ames, Upham argued that these followers of Christ are "...destined to be fashioned over his own pattern and image." These Christians therefore exist "...on a different and higher plane of being" (II.201).

Upham assumed that most of his readers were among those destined to be fashioned into Christ's image. Given this "...supposition that we are Christians after the pattern of Christ, and that our life is a life of truth, and goodness, and love...", Upham thought that he could admonish his readers as Christians. So, "while those who are on a lower plane" may be expected to "return blow for blow," the "true Christian" is disposed to show mercy. Although Upham thought that this was "not merely an imperative

dogmatism” but also “a divine philosophy,” the Calvinistic dogma of this passage is unmistakable. Yet so too is the desire to propagate a nonsectarian Christianity manifest in his assumption that all his readers would embrace his diffusive and tepid theology.

The explicit inclusion of such Calvinistic dogma highlights one of the central conundrums faced by the “old psychology:” the relation between religion, science, and society. Upham, consistent with Ames and Edwards, acknowledges here that there is a difference between Christian and other forms of morality, and strongly affirms the superiority of the Christian form. Yet, more often than not, the moral reasoning of Upham was supposed to be “neutral” and “universal,” based upon natural rather than special (i.e., biblical) revelation. Upham rarely thought that the two moralities contradicted, which is evidence that Upham’s “neutral” moral intuitions were shaped by Christian doctrine. Upham would probably have acknowledged this on some level. After all, at the very beginning of Mental Philosophy, Upham acknowledged that his book was written with a desire for and faith in “Divine assistance” (I.ii), indicating that he wanted his work to be done in accordance with the will of the Christian God. Therefore we can perhaps assume that “neutrality” and “universal” were terms regarding the nonsectarian intuitions of evangelicals rather than the intuitions of all people. As such, the shape and content of Upham’s nonsectarian psychology could be sustained in the evangelical world of the antebellum American college. Yet, in an increasingly diverse American, non-evangelical psychologists could and would use the same language of universality to very different ends.

However surprising Upham’s forays into the negative side of human nature may be, he more than adequately made up for this unpleasant digression in his section on the

benevolent affections. A simple indication that Upham preferred to emphasize the “positive” side of life is that his chapter on the benevolent affections (48 pages) is three times as long as his chapter on the malevolent affections (16 pages). It is perhaps also telling that he seems to fall back into a more Calvinistic line of thinking only when considering the negative side of human feeling.

Just as resentment is the basic malevolent affection, *love* is the foundation of the benevolent affections. Like all affections, love is a complex mental state which includes a pleasant feeling or emotion and a desire to do good to the object which elicits this feeling. Therefore, the object loved will always appear to have “some quality” which seems lovable.

There are, of course, many degrees of love, from weak to strong, and exists in different forms. He distinguishes love for children, parents, siblings, humanity, country, and also friendship, gratitude and sympathy.

As was the case with appetites, propensities and the malevolent affections, Upham thought that love could be divided into voluntary and instinctive forms. Parental affection can serve as an example. Parental affection is the strong love that parents have toward their children, in which the child is seen “...not so much a distinct and independent being as a reproduction and continuance of himself” (II.210). Parental affection, which is among the deepest loves that a human being can experience, also serves to enable parents to carry out parental duties. Upham thought it an “acknowledged fact” that this affection is “implanted” in the human mind by “the Author of the mind himself.” Voluntary exercises of parental affection depend upon the exercise of the will and arise from “mere volitional determination.” This quote again agrees with the idea

that Upham believed in a self-determining will. Yet his psychology of volition was also a modified intellectualism, since "...voluntary action [is] based upon inquiry and reason..." In contrast to all this, instinctive parental love "has no other support than in nature" (II.211).

Upham applies this kind of analysis to two other family-related affections, the filial affection (love to parents), the fraternal affection (love to siblings). These three types of affection fall under the general head of "the Domestic affections," and are

....evidence of that benevolence and wisdom which are seen so frequently in the arrangements of our mental nature. These affections are not only sources of happiness to individuals and families, diffusing an undefinable but powerful charm over the intercourse of life; they also indirectly exert a great influence in the support of society generally. (II.218)

Upham's comment that domestic affection is a great "support of society" is distinguished from that "strange notion" of Plato that domestic affections somehow are somehow in tension with "the love of country" (II.218). To the contrary:

It is unquestionable, that one of the great supports of society is the family relation. Who is most watchful and diligent in his business? Who is the most constant friend of public order, and is most prompt in rallying to the standard of the law? Who, as a general thing, is the best friend, the best neighbour, and the best citizen? Not he who is set loose from family relationships, and wanders abroad without a home; but he, however poor and unknown to fame, who has a father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters; who sees his own sorrows and happiness multiplied in the sorrows and happiness of those around him; and who

is strong in the advocacy and support of the common and public good, not only because it involves his own personal interest, but the interest and happiness of all those who are linked arm in arm with himself by the beauty and sacredness of domestic ties. (II.219)

Upham here not only supports the nineteenth-century American “cult of domesticity,” but also takes the role of public philosopher supporting the American way of self-government and democracy. Regarding the cult of domesticity, Upham did have the tendency to idealize motherhood, as will become clear below. Still, he did not advocate a strict moral difference between men and women:

...the testimony of the traveler Ledyard, who expressly says: “I have always remarked that women, in all countries, are civil and obliging, tender and humane.- To a woman, whether civilized or savage, I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship without receiving a decent and friendly answer.” In man, undoubtedly, there is more hardihood of character, and the benevolent affections are less lively. There are some things in his situation, also, as the defense of the community rests chiefly upon him, which are calculated to draw out and to impart inordinate strength to the resentful feelings. But it is absurd to suppose that there is a radical difference in the benevolent sensibilities of man and woman; and while sentiments of the most friendly and affectionate regard towards the human race are acknowledged to exist in woman’s heart, that man is naturally either indifferent or hostile to his fellowman. The language in both cases, from man as well as from woman, and from black as well as from white, when nature, unperturbed by adverse influences, is left to itself, is the

same. “The poor white man, faint and weary, came and sat under our tree. Let us pity the white man.” (II.227).

Another important part of Upham’s analysis is whether the benevolent affections could be considered morally meritorious. Although he thought that the benevolent affections were “certainly” the highest of all the natural sensibilities, and were “innocent and good” they still were not necessarily to be considered morally meritorious. Once again, Upham made recourse to the distinction between instinctual and voluntary action. When a mother hears a child’s scream of pain she automatically and “...impetuously rushes to its relief.” Although a “*naturally*” good action, it is still not virtuous since many “brute animals” are capable of similar behavior. As is the case in other instances, Upham says that the mother’s love is virtuous only when voluntary, and the classic “Arminian” example is when affections are actually at a low ebb and the *choice* is made to act lovingly anyway. Again, this notion of virtue is quite opposed to that advocated by Edwards, in which strong and unmixed desire for the good is most meritorious.

In the context Upham thought it “proper” to mention that “a theological or religious difficulty is presented...” in view of these issues. Christian experience often points to an external source of virtue, i.e., God. Since virtue is a “gift of God” it seems improper to consider it “...a thing of their own voluntary creation.” Although Upham conceded that “...Christian love...is the gift of God rather than a purely volitive or voluntary product...” (II.221), he also argued that there is no contradiction with his psychological system on this point. The harmony between the two viewpoints is found in the fact that “...Christian love...” always includes “...the consent of the understanding and the harmonious concurrence of the Will...” (II.222). How this answers the objection

is unclear. What is clear is that Upham had a sense of the tension that his Arminian impulses created vis-à-vis Calvinism. Upham's godlike will *did* have a degree of autonomy that Ames, for example, would have claimed denied God the glory of being the sole source of efficiency.

This passage is another example of the fuzzy boundaries between religion and psychology in Upham's thought, and the awkward and ultimately unreconcilable dual role of being both a "Christian" and a "neutral" psychologist at the same time. As such this passage illustrates the awkward and gradual transition from a thoroughly religious to a thoroughly secular form of psychology in America. Upham typically writes as if virtue is possible for *all people*, i.e., he never explicitly says that he is writing only about Christians. Yet, in this passage he embraces, in a manner entirely consistent with Ames and Edwards, the Puritan paradox that Christian love originates in God, yet also, because of God's work, exists in the soul as well. It seems that there are two possible ways that Upham could have explained this apparent contradiction. One is to say that non-Christian virtue is also the "gift of God," yet to do this would be to contradict his earlier assertion that Christians operate on a higher moral level than non-Christians. The other resolution would be to simply say that non-Christian virtue does not require God's help: that non-Christians have an autonomous source of virtue that Christians simply do not possess. Neither position would have been unacceptable to Upham.

Regarding the question of love for humanity, Upham argued that there are three possibilities in this regard: Indifference, hostility, or love. Upham accepted a qualified version of the third position—although humans do possess a love for humanity, it is a weak affection that "...falls far short of the Scriptural requisition..." (II.224) since it is

always hindered by selfishness. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to find someone so selfish that he does not subordinate his interests to the interests of the "...universal brotherhood..." of mankind (II.225). Further examples of this universal benevolence, Upham argued, in the general kindness that one experiences while traveling abroad, and in the existence of "benevolent institutions," such as hospitals, asylums, and charity schools. Upham's desire to find benevolence in all people is evidenced by his comment that although benevolent institutions thrive most in "Christian countries" (II.228; and undoubtedly Upham thought America a Christian country), one may still find such institutions in other lands. Yet, not to be caught making an overly controversial statement, Upham re-affirmed that "...those nations not enlightened by Christianity..." manifest a form of benevolence that is sub-standard (II.228). "Heathen or Pagan" benevolence may be "a feeble existence," but the fact that it exists at all was significant to Upham—he devotes several pages to prove the point that people do have a measure of benevolence, confronting the major arguments against the assertion (e.g., the existence of war) as he proceeded. Yet, although Ames and Edwards would have given the credit for such benevolence to God's "common grace," Upham seems to think it is simply an "attribute of human nature" (II.228).

"One of the most important modifications" of the love of mankind is patriotism, or the love of country. Although Upham does duly note the potential harm associated with a "disproportionate" patriotism that exalts country over humanity, he did endorse patriotism. When good is done to one's own country, good is done to all humanity (II.236-237). Upham closes his consideration of benevolent affections to humans with a brief consideration of pity and gratitude.

Given that this dissertation hopes to demonstrate continuity between the four eras represented in this textbook, Upham's next section is of particular interest. This section deals with the most exalted of all the benevolent affections, love to God. The consideration of love to God is necessary "in order to preserve the other principles of human nature in the position which the great Author of that nature has assigned to them, and to render their action just in itself and harmonious in its relations" (II.243). Upham believed that humanity was created to function best when it loved God the most. He hoped to base this belief on rational argumentation from "Analogy." As he argued in volume one, argument by analogy is based upon observed consistencies and uniformities in nature. These known consistencies which apply in one known thing are applied to an unknown thing.

Upham began his argument from analogy noticing that "in all the departments of the mind, so far as it has hitherto passed under our examination, we have seen evidences of contrivance and wisdom; everything has its place, adaptations, and uses; and nothing, so far as we can judge, is done imperfectly." The Intellect and the Sensibilities both exhibit this exquisite adaptiveness and design. The affections in particular are well adapted to sustain family, country and humanity. If this is the case that we have love implanted toward these comparably lower entities, then surely we must also have a love toward the infinitely great being. There seems to be a lack of consistency in this argument. Upham makes a good case that there is an adaptiveness to human-oriented loves, but he does not argue that there is an adaptiveness in loving God. Perhaps he thought such an adaptiveness were self-evident, but this again would show the degree to which he relied upon shared cultural assumptions.

Upham also turned to Scripture to argue that human beings have a naturally implanted love for God. His argument is at odds with Ames and Edwards because he argues human beings were created with a love to God, but does not mention the fall of man. Instead, he stresses that we are made in God's image, and this image includes the intellectual capability for "...a wise and full consideration of the relations of things" (II.245). Guided by this capability, human beings must have been created with love for God since intellect shows that God is most worthy of love. After developing an argument from scripture, Upham cautiously concludes that "originally" love to God "was an essential element of human nature..." (II.247). At the present moment, this love to God "is, or ought to be" operative in human nature. When humans love God they operate in the way they were designed to operate. Further, it is the lack of love to God which explains human evil.

Like the other affections, love to God can be found in instinctive and voluntary forms. The instinctive form is found in the fact that "all nations...are found groping after God" in the multiplicity of human religious expression. Voluntary love to God is understood as something that is added to the dictates of reason and the affections of the heart. Upham's Arminian God created humanity with a free will that God himself could not override:

But God...in giving man the mighty and crowning power of the will, which, in thus constituting the completion of his being, made him a true son of God, gave him a power which He could not violate. It is a great truth, which we propose more fully to consider at a future time, that God does not, and cannot, interfere with the action of the human will in any sense which implies a violation of its

freedom. (II.248)

This highly revealing quote demonstrates how far Upham was from Ames and Edwards. For these theologians, God was the fountain of every good thing, including the efficiency to do good. God's efficiency was uncaused, originating only in himself. Yet, for the sake of his own glory would communicate efficiency to human beings. Calvinists were therefore content with possessing a derived efficiency. Upham, manifesting the same spirit as Chubb when he argued that "nothing that is an action, can be the effect of the action of another..." (*Freedom of the Will*, IV.2.2), wanted to exercise Arminian self-determination. Indeed, Upham appears to think that such godlike status was part of what it meant to be a "true son of God." The son of God must have a "mighty and crowning power of the will" like God himself. Just as the purposes of the efficient Puritan could not be thwarted, the purposes of the efficient Arminian will could never be thwarted, not even by God himself.

In this context Upham recapitulates his rendition of the story of the fall of man. In the Garden, God tested man's "...willingness to harmonize his will with the divine will" (II.248). The result of this test is well known. "Human history, which proclaims everywhere the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience, is the record of the result." It is significant that Upham does not say that the evil of human history testifies to the result of this choice, which is what an Ames or an Edwards would have said. Instead, in saying that "the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience, is the record of the result" Upham indicates that he, like many nineteenth century theologians, did not believe that Adam's sin could be imputed to all mankind (Noll, 2002). Sin spreads around the world because individuals choose to sin.

Upham is very quick to move on from this point, perhaps from a desire to avoid being ensnared in theological controversy, “we do not propose, however, to delay upon these thoughts.” Leaving the detailed interpretation of the Genesis text to the theologians, Upham laid the foundations for a natural religion by asking,

...Is it too much to say...that man is still born in the garden of Paradisal beauty, the garden of a mother’s love? Is it too much to believe that he is born also with religious instincts...which in their tendencies lead him in the direction of the Infinite, but at the same time with a true and effective freedom of the will, which, by possibility at least, in the exercise of the great power that is given it, may lead him in a different direction? And is it possible to doubt that the command of God, uttered alike by the voice of nature and the voice of the great Master and Teacher...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself; is still uttered in his hearing, and is still binding upon the responsive action of his heart? (II.248-249)

Here again Upham leans away from the traditional notion of original sin, arguing that human beings possess all that they need to live virtuously: a knowledge of God’s law and the power to keep it. Consistent with the nineteenth century “cult of domesticity,” Upham is also captivated with the notion of “a mother’s love.” Whatever truth there may have been in the traditional notions of original sin were simply overridden by the sanctifying influences of domesticity.

Given these considerations, Upham concluded that belief in the wisdom of the mental structure rests upon the reality that a supreme love to God was, at the very least, part of man’s original constitution. Concerning the existence of the *continuation* of this

state, Upham seems to have been ambivalent. On the one hand he seems to take a nonsectarian and noncommittal position. On the other hand, he needs to assume that this principle still exists in human nature in order to proceed:

And now, supposing this principle to exist in the human mind, either by being originally implanted, as in Adam, or by being restored under the name of a Regeneration or New Creation, or in any way and by any true spiritual process which enlightened wisdom may suggest, we naturally proceed to inquire what relation it holds to the other' principles in this department of the mind, and what results are likely to attend upon it. (II.249)

The thing that stands out about this passage is Upham's relative indifference to theology. He wants to assume that human being are constitutionally wired to love God and that they therefore should strive to do so. At this point in his writing, it is almost as if he is saying that one may believe in regeneration or new creation (as Ames and Edwards did) or not. As long as we agree that such love to God is possible, we may move on. Yet since the Calvinist mental philosophers thought that regeneration was an absolute necessity for truly loving God, they would never have moved through this material so flippantly, or considered the new birth optional. (Indeed, it is not clear that Upham did consider new birth optional—in another place he says that both reason and revelation testify that love to God is a characteristic of the “original and...the renovated constitution of...mind,” II.251.) This is therefore an example of the way nineteenth American mental philosophy attempted to retain elements of the Christian faith while simultaneously rejecting theological nicety. It also illustrates the ambiguity of his mission: was he writing as a Christian minister to Christians, or was he writing as a

neutral mental philosopher to all people? Both goals seem to be present, and yet are blended in strange ways.

Love to God is the highest of all human affections. To prove this, Upham quotes Matthew 10:37, “He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me” (II.250). This love has tremendous psychological benefit, for “when it is in its full exercise...it may be regarded as a matter of course, that all the subordinate principles will be kept in their place.” That is, all of the natural sensibilities will be kept from exceeding their God-given boundaries. The person who loves God supremely is a properly balanced person. Upham proved this proposition from a consideration of the way “the Savior” lived. Since Christ was human he too experienced all of the natural sensibilities, but because he loved God supremely these natural sensibilities never lead him into excess or sin. Further, since this supreme love for God existed in Christ, it can also exist in humans more generally. Rejecting the Calvinist notion that sinfulness necessarily influences even the most holy Christian, Upham thought that his readers, by imitating Christ’s holy love, could enter into the perfection of the Savior.

It is a lack of this love to God that explains “...what has sometimes been called the Depravity of human nature.” Here he offers what has been called a “privative” notion of sin: i.e., it isn’t that sin is bad “stuff” that is infused into human beings, but rather is due to a lack of the good. A lack of love leads to the manifold “disorders” found in human nature. These disorders may influence all of the parts of our affective nature. The most common form of the disorder is, as Ames would have said, inordinate desire. For example, the appetites may break “...over their allotted limits,” and the propensities may

become “inordinately intense” (II.252). Upham apparently did not believe that *he* was subject to these “disorders,” but referred to a rather vague “they.” For example, although the conscience and will retain some proper function even when the sensibilities are disordered, the battle against sin is ultimately lost for “them” since “...*they* are not sustained by the love of the Supreme Being...” (II.252). Among other things, Upham here seems to pathologize sin, speaking of abnormality as belonging to a strange and ambiguously defined group. The oft-quoted passage of Ovid which Puritan voluntarists believed applied to all, now applies only to those poor souls who, unlike Upham and for whatever reason, do not have a supreme love to God: “Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor” (II.253). [“I see and approve the better course; I follow the worse,” Fiering, 1981, p. 104]. As we shall see, William James would also use this passage to describe pathology rather than normal human experience.

It should be stressed that Upham’s logic on this point led him to implicitly deny the freedom of the will to those people who lacked a supreme love to God. When arguing the point by analogy, Upham tried to show what would happen to a person who was devoid of domestic affections. This person would be “much more likely than another to fall under the dominion of the lower appetites,” than a person not so afflicted. Without these affections the will would be unable to engage in normal domestic activities in a proper way, and “all hope is gone.” By analogy, Upham was arguing, the removal of the supreme love of God would also tend to remove the freedom of the will, at least in religious exercises. The tendency of this doctrine would be to recapitulate the Calvinist idea that human beings who do not love God actually lack freedom of the will. Upham does not attempt to clarify this issue in any meaningful way. Here again we confront

Upham's ambiguous role as an enlightened Protestant American mental philosopher.

Habit and the Natural Sensibilities. Upham closed his discussion of the natural sensibilities by considering the role of habit. After reiterating points previously made that habits are formed through repetition of activity and that habit is an ultimate and essential part of human nature, he considered the way habits shape the appetites, propensities, and affections. Much of what is said in this chapter had been discussed in other contexts. Appetites begin as instincts, but when voluntarily overindulged they become "more and more intense" until they finally "acquire a complete ascendancy." (II.257). The fact that overindulgence can actually lead to "captivity" (II.258) again suggests that Upham thought that freedom of the will could be lost in this manner.

Upham argued that human beings are born with the abilities to remain in control of the natural sensibilities. If appetites are not overindulged, he said, humans retain their "mastery" over them. Regarding the propensities, "...we have the power...to subject...[them] to suitable regulation." Further, habit (as he pointed out in numerous other places) is also a great ally in the battle against sin. A woman may grow in her love to God, for example, "...going on from one degree of brightness and strength to another." Upham, here dealt with the traditional notion of sanctification or growing in holiness (which Ames dealt with, see above), seems to say that people may effect their own sanctification through habit formation: "The more we think of God, the more frequently we connect him with all our ordinary transactions, the more will the broad orb of his glory expand itself into our conceptions, and call forth the homage and love of the heart" (II.261). Once again, compared to Ames and Edwards who argued that sanctification was impossible apart from God's help, Upham appears to be "Pelagian" in his orientation, and

perhaps enamored with his godlike efficiency.

The Moral Sensibilities

At first glance, Upham's distinction between moral and natural sensibilities may seem a bit strained. After all, although Upham thought that the natural sensibilities were originally implanted in human nature, it is very clear that he believed these sensibilities were important on a moral level. In particular, his tendency to analyze each desire from the instinctive and voluntary viewpoint kept moral questions wide open in the foregoing section. The boundary between psychologist and moral philosopher is quite fuzzy in his consideration of the natural sensibilities.

So if the natural sensibilities were infused with moral import, how did Upham justify partitioning off a separate "part" of the sensibilities which he called "moral"? In the first chapter of his section on the moral sensibilities (entitled "proofs of a moral nature") he set out to justify this approach. Just as the natural sensibilities are divided into emotions and desires, so to the moral sensibilities are analogously divided into emotions of approval and disapproval and feelings of moral obligation. But how does one justify this division moral and natural sensibilities? Upham thought the division was justified because human beings possess a "moral nature."

The first proof that we have a moral nature is consciousness of "...an internal sanctioning or condemnation, approval or disapproval" of our own or other's actions. These "emotions of approval and disapproval" are elementary and simple, and are evidenced in the natural reactions of children to stories of cruelty, the everyday discourse among adults, and the structure of language. The very fact that humans have feelings of remorse is itself a feeling of moral disapproval and is further proof that we do indeed

have a moral nature. Additionally, we are capable of "...framing the abstract conceptions of moral merit and demerit," which are impossible to frame "...without possessing the antecedent notions of right and wrong" (II.278). Thankfully for the nonsectarian moral philosopher, there is also the "unanimity of mankind in respect to the great principles of right and wrong," evidenced in the laws of various nations. Even "Savage tribes" although evidencing "great perversions of the moral nature" still do manifest vestiges of this "essential attribute...[of] the universal mind of man" (II.283).

Upham's discussion of how "civil or political society" functions is a nice illustration of what he meant when he said that our "moral nature" was an irreducible component of human nature:

Society, in its *civil* or *political* form, is supported, in a very considerable degree, by the sentiment of moral obligation. If we are asked why obedience is rendered to the civil laws, the answer is, because they are enacted by the society or social body. If we are asked why we render so much deference to the will of the society or social body, the answer is, because we have agreed to. In other words, we have promised, have pledged ourselves, either expressly or by implication, to conform to it. If we are asked why we so strictly fulfill our promise, why we so scrupulously conform to our word, all the answer we can give is, that we feel under a moral obligation to do it. In other words, in order to give anything like a satisfactory answer to this question, we are obviously thrown back upon our moral constitution. (II.286)

Upham also argued that the doctrine of man's moral nature is "fully recognized in the Scriptures." In particular, "all those passages in which men are called upon to do

what is just and right...imply not only that there is a right and wrong, but that men are capable of understanding what is right, and that they are under obligation to do what is right. The term CONSCIENCE, in particular, as expressive of the fact of man's moral nature, is frequently used in the Scriptures." Upham quotes Roman ii.14-15 to prove his point:

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another. (II.289)

Given all these evidences Upham thought it was safe to conclude that man does indeed have a moral nature. Indeed, he wondered why there had been so much doubt on the topic at all.

From an Edwardsean perspective, however, Upham's notion of a moral nature is constricted. Edwards' use of the term will was very broad, subsuming Upham's natural and moral sensibilities. Everything found under this term was considered moral by nature. In Upham, only a small portion of these psychological phenomena (i.e., feelings of approval and disapproval) are given the label. One wonders if there is a parallel between the loss of will in American psychology, and the constriction of what American mental philosophers considered "moral."

Emotions of Approval and Disapproval

Having satisfied the general question of whether humans have a moral nature, Upham moved on to discuss precisely what that nature is. For one, the moral nature of humans is "less complicated" than the natural sensibilities because the moral sensibilities

do not divide into nearly as many subdivisions as the natural. Upham was convinced that, strictly speaking, only the moral emotions and the feelings of moral obligation can actually be considered moral sensibilities per se. Of all the emotional states a person can undergo, only feelings of approval and disapproval can be considered moral. These emotional states are simple and therefore not capable of being defined. These emotions are "...immediately successive to intellections, or acts of the intellect," in the same way that natural emotions follow the intellect. To put the issue in scholastic language, the intellect at the very least must specify an object to evaluate: "it is, for instance, impossible for us to feel the beauty of an object, which is an act of the Natural sensibilities, without first having a perception or knowledge of the object itself. In like manner, it is impossible for us to approve or disapprove a thing, in the moral sense of the terms, without first having some perception, some knowledge of the thing approved or disapproved" (II.292-293). Just as natural emotions are followed by the various desires, the moral emotions are followed by feelings of moral obligation. The "position" of the moral emotions is therefore *always* between "intellective acts" and feelings of moral obligation. Without the intellect the moral emotions cannot exist. Without these emotions the feelings of moral obligation cannot exist. Understandably, changes in the way the intellect perceives an object determines which moral emotions are experienced. There is no freedom in this relationship.

Since moral emotions are always concerned with the judgment of moral actions, the "objects" of the moral emotions are always "voluntary agents" (II.295), i.e., agents endowed with the three departments of the human mind. As Edwards had argued, animals are therefore never the objects of emotions of moral approval and disapproval.

Still, and going beyond Edwards here, Upham thought that something more than voluntary agency is needed in order to levy moral judgment. These voluntary agents also need to be “moral agents” in the sense that the actions which we judge are “truly in their power” (II.295). In other words, “so far as we can regulate our outward actions, we are accountable; that is to say, we are the proper objects of the emotions of moral approval and disapproval. So far as we can regulate the action of the intellect, the sensibilities, and the will, we are accountable also” (II.295-296). An action is not susceptible to moral judgment when it is either instinctive or involuntary.

Upham also tackled the question of the basis of moral judgment, and gave an honest answer that revealed the shaky foundations upon which his system rested. One person may say that an action is approved because it is commanded by God, another because it is useful, another because it agrees “to the fitness of things” (II.196). None of these answers is ultimately satisfactory because the force of each position is diminished when one asks *why* utility or God’s command “excite[s] within us” such moral emotions. Ultimately, when pressed, a people must admit that they approve of a certain action simply “*because it is right*” (II.298). Yet the right, like other simple ideas, cannot be defined. It is curious here that Upham would stick so closely to his natural epistemology on this issue when he so willingly brings scripture in at other points. The shaky foundations of Upham’s ethics seem particularly clear here.

Upham argued that there is a strict distinction to be made between intellect and consciousness, yet that there is also a very close relationship. When our intellects are convinced that a person committed a theft in cold blood, our conscience automatically condemns the action. But if the intellect subsequently learns that the theft occurred after

a period of prolonged deprivation and struggle, the condemnation of consciousness if diminished. If we finally learn that there was no theft at all, but only a mistake, conscience automatically exonerates the accused. Although Upham thought that conscience “will vary in exact concordance” with the dictates of the reasoning power, Upham then curiously concludes the reasoning power is “the servitor and handmaid of the moral power” (II.302). The strict determination of the sensibilities by the intellect in this case is reminiscent of scholastic intellectualism. Upham thought the fact that the moral sensibilities are “placed *behind* the Intellect” was evidence of “great wisdom” of the mind’s designer (II.303). Given this design, Upham concluded that it is crucial “to know much, to think much, to compare much” (II.305) in order to render the best moral choices.

In this “intellectualist” context Upham explicitly states the moral ability of human beings. Since there is such a close connection between intellect and conscience, we can therefore conclude that the moral nature is “in some measure under our control.” Since we have the ability to think rightly we have the ability to possess a “right conscience.” If we deny this fact we excuse ourselves unjustifiably. The worst crimes of human history such as “...the cruelties of the Inquisition...all the persecutions of the Protestants by the Catholics...all the persecutions of the Protestants by each other...all the acts of unkindness and tyranny which have ever been exercised upon individuals and communities” (II.306) can all be laid at the feet of wrong thinking. Even the Apostle Paul’s pre-conversion persecution of the Christians was due to ignorance. Paul “...had not made himself acquainted with all the facts of the case,” but was instead “too bigoted” and “too passionate” to make a right choice (II.307). If people have “within their reach

neglected sources of knowledge” (II.306) that could better inform their moral choices, they are culpable for wrong decisions. Instead, human beings are obliged to do what the Apostle Paul did not: “...to make a full and impartial investigation of the merits and demerits...” (II.307) of the case at hand.

The differences between voluntarist Puritan thinking on this issue and Upham is strikingly illustrated in Upham’s considerations of the Apostle Paul. Puritan/Augustinian voluntarism thought that the heart, not the intellect was the primary impediment to correct moral action (Fiering, 1981). It is possible to *know* the right thing, and yet still do the opposite. Fiering has pointed out how often the Puritans quoted Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, “*video meliora proboque; deteriora sequor* (I see and approve the better course; I follow the worse)” (p. 104). Although Upham claims that Paul’s “passions” were too strong, but that was not what kept him from doing the right thing. The problem was that “...he had no correct knowledge of the life, miracles, and doctrines of Jesus Christ, or the belief, practices, and character of Christians. His conscience, accordingly, as is its nature, acted in view of what he actually knew, and not in view of what he might have known.” His conscience was therefore determined by the intellect to disapprove of Christ. Although he was certainly not “...to blame for acting according to his conscience,” yet he was “...exceedingly to blame, for not having, as on proper inquiry he might have had and would have had, a right conscience.” Not only is this similar to the intellectualist view of volition, but also seems to presage the salvation-by-knowledge sentiment that would characterize the scientism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Upham addresses the topics of “Moral Beauty” and “Moral Sublimity” as

“incidental to the main subject [of the moral sensibilities],” (II.307, 314) and I will therefore not treat that here.

Feelings of Moral Obligation

Upham expressed some frustration that the feelings of moral obligation were often confounded with the moral emotions. The distinction was crucial in Upham’s mind, for various reasons, particularly because of the close proximity of the feelings of moral obligation to the will (I.327).

Upham made an appeal to consciousness to validate the existence of the feelings of moral obligation. Upham thought that most of his readers would have had the experience of having desire to move in a particular direction, but, simultaneously, a feeling that one *ought not* to move in that direction. In other words, the feelings of moral obligation act as a counterweight to certain immoral desires. Further, these feelings help individuals move “in opposition to their fears, in opposition to their sympathies, and their apparent interests.” In short, feelings of moral obligation have the potential of overriding desire and so prevent the mind from fatally following the strongest desire. A “man of true uprightness and honour” is defined by following the feelings of moral obligation rather than “motives of an inferior kind” (II.329).

Feelings of moral obligation are also simply necessary. “...What would men be, or what would society be, without the basis of moral obligation? There must be somewhere a foundation of duty.” Instead of finding this foundation in God or scripture, Upham thought that this foundation must be within. “We need within us not only a monitor which shall assure us what right is, but something also which shall speak, as it were, with a voice of authority, and strongly urge us to do what is right” (II.331-332).

Feelings of obligation (which follow the emotions of approval and disapproval) provide this foundation.

Unlike complex states of mind, feelings of obligation cannot be resolved into parts. These feelings “always imply action, something to be done” (II.333). Seemingly denying the Puritan paradox (as defined above), these feelings of moral obligation only arise when we believe that the thing to be done is within our power. Upham does not make a distinction between natural or moral ability here like Edwards, but he does say that feelings of moral obligation usually approach “the character of enforcement or compulsion; yet not by any means in the material sense of those terms” (II.334). These feelings are “fitted” by their “very nature strongly to control our volition.” Upham thought that his readers would certainly know this by experience. To put Upham’s psychology in Edwardsean language, feelings of moral obligation move the person out of a state of indifference, and put the agent under a kind of moral necessity to act virtuously.

Unlike the emotions which are fleeting, these feelings of obligation and duty tend to be more permanent. Further, these feelings “have special reference to the future,” while emotions “pronounce upon the character of object and actions that are either past or present” (II.335). These feelings are also always subsequent in time to the emotions and “cannot possibly exist unless preceded by them” (II.336). Feelings of obligation can also be distinguished from desires. Consciousness obviously makes the distinction.

The “fixed, permanent, and radical distinction between desires and feelings of obligation” is absolutely pivotal to the maintenance of morality. Without this “radical distinction” there would be “an utter failure of any basis of morality, either in fact or in theory.” Upham here reiterated his psychological system, revealing the moral import of

the structure he posited:

It will readily be conceded that morality implies a will, a power of choice and determination. But the mere moral emotions, viz., of approval and disapproval, do not of themselves reach the Will. They operate on the Will through the feelings of obligation; that is to say, they are always succeeded by the latter feelings before men are led to action. All other emotions operate through the Desires. *So that the will, in making up its determinations, takes immediate cognizance of only two classes of mental states, viz., Desires and Feelings of obligation.* (II.338, italics mine)

Upham's mind, then, was designed in such a way that no matter what wickedness the natural desires may suggest to the will, the feelings of moral obligation left the person with the possibility of a moral choice. Since "brute animals" also have desires, it is the feelings of moral obligation that set human apart. Upham does not here address the apparent tension between this statement and his previous contention that nearly all the natural desires can be considered from a moral point of view, and that some desires, such as love to God, clearly seem unique to human beings. Nevertheless, Upham was convinced that it was the feelings of moral obligation that formed the basic of moral agency, and so formed that basis for "moral accountability" (II.338).

There is a strict relationship between intellect and the moral nature. Except in cases of insanity, the "decisions" of the moral nature of humanity "*will in all cases conform to the facts perceived*, in other words, will conform to the facts and their relations, as they exist in the view of the intellect" (II.339). This contention is consistent with what he said about conscience. Differences in moral judgments are therefore due to

differences in intellectual perception of the facts. The person with the most accurate judgment will levy the most correct moral judgment. Yet, in all cases, the moral nature will follow the understanding. In every instance, “the moral nature...pronounces according to the light which is placed before it...” (II.342). Upham’s analysis here has the intellectualist flavor which describes moral differences between people as being due to differences in information or opinion. Some people possessed the “speculative belief” that “the Negroes were an inferior race” (II.348), a belief which led to heinous consequences. Upham does not entertain the idea that prejudicial belief may be driven by “a bad heart,” or more visceral and less intellectual considerations, as Edwards might have. While Ames and Edwards thought redemption was from start to finish an act of God touching primarily the heart, for the more optimistic Upham the cause and therefore the solution to all sinful action is in the intellect.

Upham’s goal here appears to have been to diligently defend the belief that all of humanity possess a moral sense or natural conscience. Even “Savages” are not destitute of “natural conscience” but are rather held in bondage by ignorance. By arguing that it is simply bad belief that causes sinful activity, Upham was assuring his readers that nothing is broken in the moral and psychological infrastructure of humanity. Instead of arguing that humans need new desires, like Edwards and Ames, Upham thought they simply need new information. And, while Edwards and Ames thought that only God could effect such a momentous change as changing a human heart, the task of remediation suggested by Upham seemed well within the capabilities of nineteenth century man. Redemption could be effected without God’s help.

Upham did admit, however, that there are times when moral judgment is distorted

by “a state of excited passion” (II.354). This occasional state of mind prevents the mind from taking “a right [intellectual] view of the subject” (II.355). Yet the fact that Upham considered these states abnormal supports the contention that his psychological system was more analogous to the “intellectualism” of centuries past than “voluntarism.”

Although the feelings of moral obligation are usually strong enough to compel action, Upham also acknowledged that these feelings are limited and “cannot overcome everything” (II.355). If desires become overly strong, “there is a possibility, at least, of the sentiments of duty being overcome” (II.356). The optimism in these passages is astounding when compared to the thought of Ames or Edwards. While the Puritan psychology of the past thought that sinfulness was the norm, Upham seemed to think that feelings of moral obligation usually held sway in human nature. They “so frequently predominate” (II.356). How is it that the sentiments of duty may be overcome? Only through the “instigation of the desires” which provide a “distorted view of things” to the intellect. Upham here indicates that the feelings may distort the intellect, a theme that is not common in his psychology. He also does not deal with the following question: if the intellect is distorted by desire, will not the feelings of moral obligation then also be distorted? And if this is the case, how will there be any contradiction between desire and the sentiments of duty?

Upham’s desire to defend the “moral nature” of humanity at times seems to amount to a denial of the doctrine of original sin. For example, he notes that some object to the idea of a moral nature because of “the conduct of robbers and outlaws from society” (II.357). This objection did not discourage Upham since, first, there are relatively few robbers and outlaws in society, and second, these people may have been

subjected to “cruel disappointment and poverty, combined with contempt, injustice, and oppression on the part of their fellow-men” (II.358). Further, even “among the most depraved and hardened of mankind” we find “the remains of a moral nature” expressed in kindness and promise keeping within their own circles. Yet, more than a denial of original sin, Upham, writing outside of the constraints and protection of a confessional system, was trying to prove in secular terms what the theological systems of the past took for granted: human beings are moral beings.

Human Foundations for Immutable Moral Distinctions

Just as he was concerned to prove that human beings possess a moral nature, Upham was also concerned with providing a secular proof for the fact that judgments of right and wrong have an absolute standard, i.e., that there actually is “a great standard of Rectitude, by a reference to which the morality of every action is to be measured” (II.363). The idea that right and wrong really exist was important to Upham in “the highest sense.”

Perhaps part of the problem that people had in gaining a clear idea of right and wrong was that these things are not “perceptible by the senses.” Although right and wrong are not “object[s] of the mere outward perceptivity,” humanity may gain a firm knowledge of these things through the working of the “Internal or Pure Intellect.” This pure intellect, working “independently of the direct instrumentality of the senses” puts the person in touch with eternal standards of right and wrong. Here Upham clearly has embraced the Enlightenment project of putting absolute moral standards on nonsectarian and universalistic grounds. The articulation of a universally acceptable morality is possible through introspective psychology.

The moral sensibility or conscience takes its lead from this internal intellect. Just as right and wrong is “revealed” in this internal intellect (II.364), the conscience can therefore base its moral judgments upon absolute standards of Rectitude. Further, Upham argued that “men universally form the notions of RIGHT and WRONG,” and that each of these notions has a “distinctive nature.” The concepts are fundamentally opposed to one another and are not interchangeable: “they are placed ever apart” (II.369). Upham thought this consideration of “notions” could be used to oppose Hobbes who argued that “nothing either right or wrong in its own nature.” How he moved from “notions” of right and wrong to the actual existence of right and wrong is less clear: unless one remembers that he argued on the premise that the structure of the human mind will reliably tell us something about the nature of the universe. Similarly, he argued that since human languages invariably contain words meaning right and wrong, and this reality “must have its adequate cause” (i.e., God), then we can be assured that right and wrong really do exist. Morality is written in “the very structure and action of the human mind,” (I.372), and this structure is the design of the “God of truth” (II.373). Upham also thought that anger and gratitude were also evidence of the “immutability of moral distinctions,” as well as the common notions that human beings typically have of God. “...The opinion which mankind generally form of the Supreme Being...always include[s] the idea of right, equity, or justice” (II.381). As he typically did, Upham finished his lengthy justification of the immutability of moral distinctions by considering the claims of scripture.

Upham concluded his defense of the reality of right and wrong criticizing the idea “sometimes taught in books and in places of education” (II.387) that right and wrong are

not tied to the nature of things, but are related rather to personal interest or the commands of others. This belief “greatly lowers the standard of moral excellence” (II.387-388), and greatly endangers the character of youth. Instead, the young should be taught to “honor” and “love” the right as a moral object worthy in itself. If this happens, the outcome would be much the same as the outcome that James thought would follow solid habits:

And youth... should be so imbued with the love of virtue as to inquire, as it were by a sort of *instinct*, not whether an action is required by one high in power or promises to be of some personal benefit, not whether it will advance the interests of a particular sect or party, but, in all cases, whether it is RIGHT. With such a training of their moral dispositions, they will stand firm when everything is shaken and in commotion around them; they will have strength in themselves, a strength not of earth; they will go forth amid the darkness and perplexities of life, surrounded with a light emanating from their own bosoms, and under the smiles of an approving God. (II.388)

The only difference between this outcome and the outcome predicted by James, is that God is somehow involved and pleased in this steadfast righteousness.

The Application of a Nonsectarian Restoration: Moral Education

Upham closed his discussion of moral sensibility with a consideration of moral education, a type of education that had unfortunately “held a subordinate rank compared with that purely intellectual education which deals wholly with the mere acquisition of knowledge” (II.388). Upham looked forward with great interest to the time when “moral education shall at least be put on a footing with intellectual” (II.389). Upham thought that his psychological system, positing an intellect capable of forming notions of right

and wrong, and a conscience which issues in moral emotions and feelings of obligation, was “basis enough for a consistent and durable moral education” (II.389). Despite the arguments of Rousseau that children are not able to receive moral instruction, Upham thought that children at an early age ought to “be made subjects of assiduous moral culture” (II.390).

The “outlines of a system of moral culture,” i.e., the specific characteristics of a “course of training” are difficult to specify in few words. Upham therefore offered a few pointers. Given the fact previously asserted, of the preeminancy of the intellect in moral behavior, it is no wonder that Upham suggested, “suitable pains ought to be taken to introduce into the young mind correct speculative opinions” (II.393). Given the “amazing power” (II.393) of belief, one ought to “consider well what truths we adopt” (II.394). For example, and most importantly, “the speculative opinion that Jesus Christ is the great teacher and redeemer of men” is of great benefit to youth, having “already changed the face of domestic and civil society, and, like a little leaven which leaveneth the whole lump, is secretly regenerating the whole mass of human nature.” Upham here attempts to retain a nonsectarian Christianity, once again stressing Christ’s moral teachings over the specifics of doctrine.

Upham’s version of nonsectarian Christianity was also consistent with the intellectualist flavor of his psychology. Upham pointed out “the important remark of the Saviour to his disciples, ‘and ye shall know the TRUTH, and the TRUTH shall make you free,’” as being particularly relevant to the issue of moral education. He repeated his contention that “the false practices of heathen nations” are “based on false speculative opinions” (II.395). Yet, in this vein, and somewhat surprisingly, Upham thought that it

would be “the Word of God, filled as it is with moral and religious truth, which is destined to be instrumental, under the superintendence of a beneficent Providence, of the rectification of the moral errors of the human race” (II.395). Here again we find Upham’s ambiguous simultaneously Christian and secular moral project. Moral revival can be accomplished through teaching correct speculative opinion, yet this revival also needs to be through the Word of God, and God’s beneficent providence.

Also along these lines, Upham insisted that “all morality must necessarily be defective...which proceeds on the principle of excluding RELIGION” (II.395). Although it is possible for a nonreligious person to do some things well, “he [still] comes short in the most essential part.” Lacking religion, that is, failing “in infinitely the most essential point,” renders whatever good one does seriously flawed. (II.395). Given the centrality of religion, it is curious that Upham does not get very specific about what this religion might look like. On a general level, “moral education must include, as a leading element, some instruction in regard to the existence and character of God, and those religious duties which are involved in the fact of his existence and character” (II.396). Upham names God as “an object infinitely exalted,” but his God was, compared to Ames and Edwards, a nonsectarian moral object. Still, belief in this object accompanied “with perfect love in the heart, is beyond all question the great foundation and support of a truly consistent moral life” (II.396).

Upham thought that habit was also a crucial part of moral education, for many of the same reasons that James did. “The more scrupulous and exact we are in the observance of the practical part of morals, the more easy it will become. Every repetition of morality, in whatever acts it may show itself, will strengthen the moral tendency. SO

that, at last, the whole life will run easily and vigorously in the path of rectitude” (II.396). After giving examples of this in terms of truth-telling, Upham noted, like James, that “the effects of HABIT...may be seen frequently in the outward deportment,” and seen “in the various exercises of the appetites and passions” (II.398). Again, sounding very much like James, Upham, in view of potentially negative consequences, urged his readers to translate moral precept into action:

Our moral principles, however correct they may be, will be of but little value to us, unless they are put into practice by being incorporated into the daily and hourly series of living acts. It is thus that habits are formed, which give strength for the present, and abundant encouragement for the future.-Nor is this all. If our habits are the opposite of conscientious; in other words, if we disregard the suggestions of the moral sense, and, in repeated and frequent instances, throw contempt upon its authority, the probability is, that the edge of its perception will be blunted, and that it will be partially paralyzed and weakened in its operation. (II.399)

Upham, ever more optimistic than James, maintained hope even for the moral sloucher who frequently acts against conscience. Although the powers of the mind may suffer from such neglect, they (especially the conscience) very rarely “suffer an absolute extinction” (II.399).

Finally, in an apt illustration of the blending of evangelicalism, common sense, and republicanism which Noll has argued is the unique characteristic of nineteenth century American religion, Upham thought that the preceding comments were of particular importance for “the citizens of *this* country” (II.400, italics mine). Other

governments that do not rely on the virtue of the citizenry “may by possibility sustain itself amid the prevalence of loose moral principles.” But in a government that depends upon “the opinions of the people,” this is certainly not the case. “If there be any truth which the history of all ages has clearly established, it is, that a republican form of government cannot be sustained for any length of time without purity in the public moral sentiment.” Upham closed his consideration of the moral sensibilities with a meditation that would certainly bring pause to any patriotic nineteenth century American:

How deplorable, then, will be our situation, if the time shall ever come when the people of the United States shall permit themselves to disregard or to underrate the important subject of correct morals! (II.400)

Imperfect Sentimentive Action

Upham closed his section on the second “department” of the mind, the sensibilities, with a consideration of abnormality. The following will be a brief consideration of this relative brief section of Mental Philosophy. I have already noted a tendency in Upham to pathologize states that were considered sinful and normal by the Calvinist authors. Further, James does not explicitly deal with abnormality, so a comparison of the two on this point is not possible.

Upham clearly thought that the sentiments typically have a “salutary restraint” upon human activity. Still, there are occasionally “disastrous deviations” from this norm. Disordered activity exists on a continuum. A person may manifest a “mere” or minor “irregularity of action,” or a full-blown case of “insanity” (II.403) in which the irregular action “becomes so great, so pervading, and so deeply rooted in the mind that the individual has no power of restoration in himself” (II.404). The idea that an individual

typically has a “power of restoration in himself” contradicts his other less typical contentions that the source of restoration is found in God, and is a clear contrast with Ames and Edwards who more consistently maintained that God is the fountain of all virtue. The quote also reveals that Upham thought of insanity in terms of volition, as a kind of loss of ability to keep the self on the straight and narrow.

Like his analysis of the intellect in which Upham described disorders of each cognitive power, so too Upham applied his analysis to the sentimental powers, i.e., the appetites, propensities, and affections. Here too Upham pathologizes what Calvinists would have considered normal moral struggle. Alcoholics are in bondage to their sin and soon learn that “in their own strength there is not hope” (II.405), lessons which all Christians of previous generations would have been taught. Example after example, Upham frames abnormal sentimentive action as a loss of volitional control over one’s own behavior. Whether the “ruling passion” (II.414) of one’s life be acquisitiveness (II.409), or the desire of esteem (II.413), or power (II.415), the disordered mind is a mind deprived of normal voluntary power. The mind is then subject to “irresistible impulse” (II.432).

For the same reasons, Upham was also concerned about “sympathetic imitation,” devoting an entire chapter to the topic. Sympathetic imitation can influence one person or a group of people. In all cases, the affected persons are “strongly agitated by some internal emotion, desire, or passion; and this inward agitation is expressed by the countenance, gestures, or other external signs.” This natural (i.e., not supernatural) phenomenon can also spread from person to person. The substance of this agitation is that “we both act and feel as others” (II.418). Examples of sympathetic imitation include

the way our faces tend automatically assimilate the sudden facial expressions of others, the way we twist and turn our bodies as we watch a tight-rope walker, or the way children will cry when they see other children cry. This phenomenon may also explain the “tremendous power of mobs” (II.420). The contagion of extraordinary symptoms associated with Mesmer’s “animal magnetism” experiments can likewise be explained as cases of sympathetic imitation.

In all of these cases, the most noteworthy effect of sympathetic imitation is the loss of voluntary control over one’s own actions. Upham thought that sympathetic imitation may have certain “beneficial ends,” yet, most often, it is “very likely” to have produce negative effects. The power of the will was a precious thing to Upham, and anything diminishing this power was to be avoided.

It is even possible for a person to enter into a state of “moral derangement” by continually ignoring the dictates of the conscience. Although the conscience will not easily give up the battle, it is still true that “multitudes have prepared themselves for the greatest wickedness, and have become, in fact, morally insane, by their own voluntary doing.” In these cases, the conscience is almost “annihilated.” Yet, Upham, always the optimist, put the stress on the word *almost*. No matter how heinous the sin, “the conscience never dies.” Indeed, “it seems to gather vivification and strength in the period of its inactivity” (II.441). Still, since the person is to blame for ignoring the dictates of conscience, he is still accountable for his evil acts while in the state of enthrallment. Upham, like Edwards, did not think that the will needs to be in a state of perfect indifference to be culpable. Yet, Upham was only willing to concede this point in the most extreme cases, when the agent could easily be blamed for his enthrallment. Also

similar to Edwards who argued that natural necessity overrules accountability, Upham considered the case of “natural or congenital moral derangement” in which the person’s understanding of moral matters is limited or obliterated by nature, Upham argued that accountability is limited or erased.

Summary and Conclusion

Upham discussed the topics of sensibility and will in the second volume of his *Mental Philosophy*, an approach that reflects Upham’s theologically momentous although not entirely new practice of dividing the soul into three rather than two faculties. By dividing what had been known as “the will” into two parts, Upham automatically “shrunk” the psychological meaning of the concept while attempting to elevate its importance. One reason for carefully considering Upham’s cogitations on the sensibilities, then, is that these cogitations would have, in Edwards and Ames’s thinking, been cogitations on the will. Yet, as it will become evident, Upham even reorganized the sensibilities in such a way as to increase the importance and autonomy of the will. Once again, however, the ironic outcome of this attempt to elevate the will was to create a faculty that was frequently irrelevant to the everyday psychology of the person.

The intellect is, by itself, incomplete. Its otherwise cold powers cannot impel action—and action was important for all four of our authors. The sentiments then add the needed additional thrust to move the person beyond mere useless intellection. They therefore serve as “the springs of action, back of the intellect.” The sensibilities therefore require the action of the intellect, but are distinguished from that action.

Upham proposed a peculiar “division” of the “sensibilities” which, as we shall see, was designed to elevate the status of the will. This distinction was between the

“natural” sensibilities and the “moral” sensibilities. Although this distinction immediately recalls Edwards’ distinction of natural and moral causes, closer consideration reveals how very different the two distinctions were. For Edwards all inclinations and “sensibilities” were moral. For Upham, only some sensibilities were moral. Indeed, only a very small portion of them. Here too Upham may have contributed to the “shrinking” of the moral agent in American psychology.

The natural sensibilities precede the moral sensibilities in order of time. This is because the moral sensibilities (i.e., the “conscience”) stand in judgment of the natural sensibilities. Natural sensibilities have to do with objects as they appear desirable to us personally, and moral sensibilities as they appear right or wrong in a universal sense. The natural sensibilities divided into emotions and desires. Natural emotions always follow intellections and always precede desires. Emotions are feelings of pleasure and displeasure that we associate with various objects. Upham’s discussion of natural emotions is revealing because it shows that Upham had a broad vocabulary of “objects” which were worthy of attention. Included among these objects was God, which demonstrates the awkwardness of Upham’s labeling these emotions “natural” i.e., those we share with the animals. The crucial assertion concerning the emotions, however, is that they cannot move the will. Emotions are not impulsive.

The impulsive force of the natural sensibilities is found in the desires. Natural desires follow natural emotions, vary in strength, and have a tendency toward movement. The only thing that prevents desires from issuing in action is the will. As such the will serves as a kind of gateway for the desires. Once again, Upham in the interests of

elevating the will, restricts its role here, although we have not yet come in this summary to the moral sensibilities which clarify the role of will in decision-making.

Upham listed four types of natural sensibilities. Upham analyzes each of the natural sensibilities from a moral perspective, which is strange given the fact that “moral sensibilities” are a separate category. First, were the instincts, a type of God-given desire that help functioning when reason can’t come to the aid. The appetites are also God-given and good but can be abused. When an appetite is pursued for itself, the action is instinctive and free from moral judgment. When pursued for the pleasure of it, the action is voluntary and morally culpable. The propensities include the desire for self-preservation, for property, or for power. When these are kept in subordination to duties we owe to God these propensities too are good.

The class of natural sensibilities on which Upham spent most of his time was the affections. Upham discussed anger and malevolence, and the times when such affections can be considered sinful.

Throughout this section Upham makes several telling theological and ethical assertions. He asserted that the Christian moral code is superior to other codes, consistent with the nonsectarian Protestantism of the nineteenth century American college. He sings the praises of family-related affections, and is particularly effusive about a mother’s love. As such Upham reveals himself to have been sympathetic with and reflective of the nineteenth century “cult of domesticity” (Cott, 1997, pp. 84-98) which stressed the importance of the mother’s efforts in the spiritual destiny of her children. There is also a cautious advocacy of patriotism, consistent with Noll’s (2002) thesis that American

religion had by the nineteenth century become a synthesis of common sense reasoning, republican virtue, and evangelical Christianity.

Consistent with the “Arminianism” portrayed by Edwards, Upham argued that the exercise of the domestic affections was only virtuous when done effortfully, i.e., when there is some contrary inclination pulling the person away from their natural duty. This emphasis on effort would, from the perspective of William James, be profoundly well-placed. In his Principles of Psychology, James placed great importance on the experience of effortful will, seeing the experience as the only foundation for free will. In so doing, however, James contributed to the ‘shrinking’ and disappearance of the American will. But this must be deferred until later chapters.

Upham also stressed human abilities throughout, manifesting the “Arminian impulse” described above. Conscious that he may have been transgressing the ways of his native Calvinism, he explicitly addressed the question as to whether his psychology denied that God is the author of all moral goodness. Upham, not surprisingly, denied this to be the case. Upham seemed to desire to find a native benevolence in human souls, and frequently seemed to move away from Calvinistic notions of original sin. The Arminian impulse to find in humanity a self-determined sovereignty and in God a wiliness to defer to that sovereignty, Upham argued that “...God...in giving man the mighty and crowning power of the will, which, in thus constituting the completion of his being, made him a true son of God, gave him a power which He could not violate. It is a great truth, which we propose more fully to consider at a future time, that God does not, and cannot, interfere with the action of the human will in any sense which implies a violation of its freedom” (II.248). Human efficiency was therefore theologically necessary. Being a son

of God meant being godlike (in the Amesian sense), i.e., possessing a will that is unthwartable. Because human beings are little pictures of God, they possess a limited but real self-determined efficiency. Upham did not address the Calvinistic objection that God's will is free, but still necessarily good.

Upham's Arminian sensibilities also led him to limit the application of the favorite saying of the Puritans from Ovid, "*Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor*" (II.253) ["I see and approve the better course; I follow the worse," Fiering, 1981, p. 104]. Instead of applying to all people (as the Puritans thought), Upham thought the saying applied only to the pathological. Significantly, Upham included love to God as one of the most important "natural" (as opposed to moral) sensibilities, and thought that lack of love to the deity is the cause of much misery in life.

Upham closed his section on the sensibilities by analyzing the "moral sensibilities." The moral sensibilities or conscience pronounce judgment on the natural sensibilities. A person may desire a cookie (natural sensibility), for example, and the conscience (moral sensibility) says whether that desire is good or evil. Conscience, Upham thought, is determined by the intellect. Since a good conscience is necessary for morally virtuous activity, evil is due to intellectual error. Since human beings are free to pursue the truth and correct their intellectual errors, we therefore have control over a right conscience.

As was the case in the natural sensibilities, in which the intellect moves the emotions which in turn influence the desires, moral emotions follow the intellect immediately, while the feelings of obligation follow the moral emotions. These feelings of obligation are analogous to the natural desires, and serve as an impetus to morally

appropriate action (so long as the intellect correctly perceives the issue). Although these distinctions may seem tedious, Upham's system ingeniously created an enormously important role for his "Arminian" will. The will acts as the ultimately undetermined arbiter between the natural desires and the feelings of moral obligation. Since the will is free, the person almost always has the ability to act according to conscience.

CHAPTER IX

THE APOTHEOSIS OF WILL

The True Nature of the Will

Upham thought the will to be “a subject difficult in itself, and the occasion in past times of more controversy than any other,” yet, when “placed in its true position,” the topic is “rendered comparatively easy.” Although last in his analysis, the will is in a “higher and more authoritative position” relative to the Intellect and Sensibility. The will is the foundation for personal responsibility and serves as “an authoritative center” of the person. He thought that Horne Tooke’s verse expressed well the centrality of the will: “‘Tis the last keystone That makes the arch; the rest that there were put Are nothing, till that comes to bind and shut” (II.459).

Although Upham’s compartmentalized psychology certainly lacks the unity of Edward’s conception, he still did insist that the “three great departments” of the mind are connected together in many ways. Not only do the three departments influence each other, but subdepartments within departments are also interconnected.

Intellect and Will

The intellect is “the foundation, the basis of the existence and of the action both of the Sentimentive and of the Volitional nature.” It is impossible to be pleased or to love or to hate (actions of the sensibilities) without first perceiving an object with which to be pleased, etc. “If we approve or disapprove a thing, it is very evident that we must have a knowledge of some object of approval or disapproval; that there must be something upon

which these emotions can fasten” (II.460). This is also the case with the will. There must be some “object of knowledge before the mind” for the will to operate at all. Here Upham follows both Ames and Edwards.

Upham thought that most agreed that the mind is “evidently framed for movement.” Instead of being “essentially dormant,” the mind was “designed to be an attendant and ministering angel to the great Being who made it...” It is in this activity that the will is most clearly seen, since the will is “the immediate and proximate seat and source of action,” particularly “*outward* action” (I.462). The will is the end and purpose of the intellect. Indeed, if the understanding were not somehow connected to the will, all of its activity would be to no avail—it would be a useless faculty of the mind. But this does not diminish the dignity of the intellect: its crucial role is evidenced by the fact that people address one another’s intellects when they desire to produce some action. “We do not address the Will directly and alone, nor do we directly address ourselves to the emotions...” (I.463). Instead, we hope to move a person by influencing first the intellect.

The connection between intellect and will is *indirect*. This should be clear from the preceding chapters, where Upham carefully laid out the step-by-step pattern of mental activity. The work of the intellect is always “carried on through the mediation of the *sensibilities*.” Further, the appropriate object of the intellect is always “knowledge,” but, as Ames and Edwards loved to point out, knowledge itself does not move the will. For example, a person may after a train of reasoning conclude that a particular investment would be a benefit to himself and his family. This conclusion will fail to influence the will unless it first sparks some emotion indicating that the idea is a good one, and then a desire to pursue the object. Upham considered it one of the great errors of earlier mental

philosophy that intellect and will were in direct, unmediated contact. Although Locke committed this error at first, he did “on more mature examination” (II.467) repent of this erroneous viewpoint, acknowledging that desire must connect intellect and will. Upham closed his chapter arguing that the powers of will and intellect are “not perfectly correspondent to each other” in particular individuals, i.e., that some people with great powers of intellect may have relatively weak wills, and vice versa.

Sensibility and Will

As he stated frequently in his chapter on the Sensibilities, Upham reiterated that it is this department of mind that “sustains a direct connexion with the Will” (II.471). Upham reminded his reader that the sensibilities are divided into the natural and moral. The natural sensibilities are further divided into emotions and desires, while the moral sensibilities are divided into moral emotions and feelings of obligation. Upham thought that the division between natural and moral sensibilities was based upon the fact that human beings “have a moral nature” as well as a natural or “pathematic” nature. The problems with this distinction, i.e., that many of the “natural” sensibilities are clearly moral in their nature, have been discussed in chapter eight. Nevertheless, Upham maintained this distinction firmly, insisting that these two types of sensibility exist “side by side.” The fact that they exist simultaneously guaranteed that the will always had the potential of being presented with the morally right choice (based upon the mind possessing correct information). No matter how perverse one’s natural sensibilities, the moral sentiments preserved moral accountability. There is here no Edwardsean notion that the “strongest” desire (natural or moral) will determine the will. As we shall see, the will retains its autonomy and acts as a self-determined arbiter among these motives.

Upham was not afraid to use deterministic language when it came to the relation between intellect and sensibility. The intellect determines the emotions, which in turn determine desire. “This may be regarded as an ultimate fact or principle in our mental constitution” (II.474). The correspondence between intellect and emotion is strict: “there will generally be an entire correspondence between the two.” Emotions are usually “the true and precise measure of the natural and moral beauty of objects, and of their deformity.” Upham’s optimism is again evident in this conjecture. Neither original sin nor human limitation nor any other factor may inevitably distort the mind’s direct link to natural and cosmic reality. Still, the correspondence does frequently break down, but not because of the structure of the mind. Instead, human “carelessness” is the culprit (II.475).

Emotions are “one step nearer the Will” than the acts of the understanding. Yet these are still incapable of influencing the will. As an example, Upham invited the reader to consider a person who “contemplates some picture of excellent workmanship, which appears to him beautiful and sublime, and excites within him emotions of that character.” Still, these emotions do not bring forth an action, a volition:

He stands, and gazes, and the tide of emotion swells in upon him, and he is overwhelmed with it. But while this portion of his Sensibilities alone is awakened and called into exercise he will remain as inactive as if he had been formed of intellect merely. He will take no measures to possess the painting, or to do anything else in respect to it, until he is under the influence of another portion of the Sensibilities entirely distinct from emotions. (II.476).

This passage highlights another interesting difference between Upham and his Puritan

forebears. Both Ames and Edwards stressed that the will need not be expressed in outward action. Changing Upham's example slightly will help to illustrate the difference. If the aforementioned feeling of sublimity were directed at God, both Ames and Edwards would have considered the "tide of emotion swell[ing]" and the being "overwhelmed" as virtuous acts of the will. Perhaps it is an indication of the pietistic and practical strain of American Protestantism (described by D. G. Hart) that Upham insisted that acts of will must manifest themselves in outward actions. Still, Upham's notion of volition is more narrow than the notion of Ames and Edwards, and so too is Upham's understanding of the moral side of human nature: for the feeling of sublimity was simply a natural, i.e., not a moral, emotion in his frame of thinking.

Upham thought that his step-by-step understanding of the mind revealed "the admirable economy of the mind," and he exulted in the "wisdom which pervades its wonderful structure." If emotions cannot move the will, they at least "lay the foundation of other mental states which can." These states are, of course, the "desires," or the "feelings of moral obligation."

It is the desires that stand in direct proximity to the will. The emotions indicate that an object is good or bad. From this information, the desires to approach or avoid the object then take hold. In the case of the moral nature (as opposed to the natural), it is the feelings of moral obligation that follow the moral emotions. The whole drama of volition is found in the fact that "not infrequently these two classes of mental states stand before the Will in direct and strong opposition to each other." Upham thought that his psychological system was superior because it allowed for this tension. A system in which "desires and obligations held the relations of antecedence and sequence," for

example, would not allow for this tension. Neither would a system like Edwards, which lumped all motives together onto a single scale. In the Edwardsean psychology, both desires and obligations would be among the many motives competing for preeminence, and the will would be determined by the cumulative preponderation of motives.

Upham's Arminian ingenuity was to create a view of mind that kept tension and indecision at the heart of things, creating the need for an internal Arbiter to make the final decision.

The Will, then, for Upham, "is the great result, to which they [the various faculties and sub-faculties] all, in their appropriate position, contribute, and with which they all, therefore, sustain an established connexion, though not with the same degree of nearness" (II.479). By positing that "both desires and obligations...[stand] side by side in equal proximity, and with equal psychical or mental possibilities and rights," he assured that there would be not only "a basis for the operations of the Will," but also a basis for "moral accountability."

And hence it follows, in accordance with what is constantly presented to our notice, that, in the exercise of volition, men are not shut up to one form of action, but are enabled and required, in all cases where such a distinction actually exists, to discriminate between the UTILE and the HONESTUM, between the desirable and the just, between what is merely profitable or prudential, and what is virtuous.
(II.479)

The Edwardsean question at this point would be: how, precisely, do these desires *determine* the will? When the will is presented with a desire of a certain strength and a feeling of a certain strength, can we then predict which direction the will will move?

Upham believed that the strength of these two great motives to volition may vary and at times be incommensurate with one another. He enumerated factors which determine the strength of these motives, particularly knowledge. It is knowledge which largely determines the strength of desire and the strength of the feeling of obligation. Upham was not uncomfortable positing a deterministic relation between knowledge and motive strength. But what is the relation between motive strength and the will? Upham leaves his reader hanging at this point, awaiting the answer to the Edwardsean question. Recall that Edwards had criticized Chubb for creating a psychology in which motives were necessary to move the will, yet motive strength was largely irrelevant to the will's ultimate decisions. The problem with this approach is that motives are really only given lip service, and motive strength is in the end meaningless. Upham, like Whitby, would move in this Arminian direction.

Volitions

Given Upham's psychologizing up to this point, he could confidently ask, "destitute of the power of willing, is it not evident...that man would be an inefficient and useless being?" (II.483). Since the mind is designed by God to produce two sometimes contrary motives to action, desire and feelings of moral obligation, the person would, without a will, move "hither and thither, in various and contradictory directions." It logically follows, then, that the mind must possess some power to pull the mind out of its natural ambivalence. "...There must be somewhere in the mind a power, which, amid the complicated variety of mental impulses, exerts a regulative and controlling sway" (II.484). To put the matter a bit differently:

...It is the authoritative voice of the Will, which, holding a central position in

relation to the conflicting claims of interest and passion on the one hand, and of conscience on the other, pronounces the decisive and final arbitrament. (II.484)

The will is “the cumulating point in man’s spiritual nature,” sitting “as the witness and arbitress over all the rest.” The sentiments “revolve around” the will like a gravitational center, laying the foundation for the activity of the will, yet also being “harmonized” and “controlled” by its magical powers.

Upham here uses language that seems to conceive of the will as a reified separate existence exerting control over the mental phenomena. He tried to deny that he was doing this, interposing “a word of caution” immediately after his rhapsodizing over the powers of will:

It is not to be inferred, when we speak of one part of the mind in distinction from another, and of passing from one part or power to another, that the mind is a congeries of distinct existences, or that it is, in any literal and material sense of the terms, susceptible of division. (II.485)

The fact that the mind is divided into several seemingly independent compartments does not “imply a want of unity in the principle from which they originate” (II.485). Given the unity of the mind, the term will is not meant to signify “anything separate from the mind” (II.485).

Despite Upham’s qualifications, he thought that the term will was meant to describe “the mind’s ability to operate in a new and specific way.” He further defined the will as “the MENTAL POWER OR SUSCEPTIBILITY BY MEANS OF WHICH WE PUT FORTH VOLITIONS.” The will, therefore, is the power to will. This will possesses “a causative relation to its appropriate results” (II.485). So, since the results of

the will are volitions, and it is the will that causes these volitions, Upham seemed to define the will as a self-determining power. Upham never addressed Edwards' argument on this point in Mental Philosophy.

Upham thought that since volitions are simple states of mind they were by definition indefinable, yet still known by consciousness. Still, he could posit that "*every act of the will must have an object*," and that we must perceive these objects of will to be within our reach (II.487). Further, volitions have to do with "our own action, either some bodily movement or some act of the mind" (II.489). Here Upham seems to use Amesian and Edwardsean language, positing that the will does not necessarily issue in outward action. Acts of will are also geared toward the future, always "reach[ing] forth its hand to grasp objects which have not as yet a being" (II.491).

Volitions also differ in terms of their strength. In considering what determines the strength of volitions, Upham posited that strong desires increase the strength of volition, indicating a "common sense" view of motive strength and an apparent openness to a deterministic view of the will on some occasions.

The Distinction Between Desires and Volitions

Whatever role motive strength has in determining volition, Upham was quick to argue that it is not an absolute role, as Edwards had argued. The last chapter of his section on the basics on the psychology of volition was dedicated to making this point absolutely clear. Although some would argue that the distinction between volitions and desires is not absolutely clear, and in other writers the two were equated (such as Edwards), Upham maintained that the separation was "essential and indispensable." Most of the "obscurity" associated with the debates on the will have been due to the fact

that many authors had made the “mistake” of failing to adequately separate desire and volition. While acknowledging their close relation, Upham thought that a failure to maintain that these two are “entirely distinct” prevents even “the greatest minds” from reaching the truth in mental philosophy. Perhaps Upham had Edwards in mind as he wrote this. Regardless, it is clear that theological concerns had a profound influence on Upham’s psychology.

One reason mental philosophers fail to make the proper distinction between desire and volition is that the latter usually follows the former seamlessly. “And, in consequence of this regular consecution, which is also, for the most part; very quick or rapid (so much so, in fact, as hardly to furnish any basis for remembrance), we gradually fall into the habit of confounding the two together, and at last come to believe that there is, in truth, no difference between them” (II.496). Upham thus conceded that in most acts of volition there is indeed no act of arbitration, no conflict between motives. Yet in conceding this, Upham also seemed to concede that the will is, in “perhaps a considerable majority of cases” (II.496) irrelevant to mental life. The consequence of this was that the Arminian will was a shrinking will, although Upham may not have noticed.

Upham thought that consciousness clearly testified to the distinction between desire and volition. Although the two are very closely related to each other “in their consecutive relations,” consciousness pronounces “an entire separation” of the two “as far as their *nature* is concerned” (II.497). Upham invited his readers to reflect upon their own conscious experience to see that this is the case, tipping the scales perhaps in his favor by suggesting that these introspections focus upon “those various circumstances of enticement, and temptation, and action in which we daily find ourselves placed” (II.497),

i.e., focusing upon conscious experiences in which a difference between will and desire seems most plausible. (James, too, thought that cases of temptation were the most quintessential acts of will). Upham was confident of the results of this introspective experiment. "...Will not consciousness not only clearly indicate a distinction, but even assert the impossibility of an identity in the case under consideration? We cannot entertain a doubt that it will." Upham here perhaps did not recall Edwards' comments about the weakness of relying upon "experience" in order to make universal assertions. Just as Edwards denied having ever experienced a self-determining power within his own mind, so too he probably would have failed Upham's thought experiment here.

Upham offered other proofs that desire and volition differ from one another. For one, desires tend to linger while volitions are momentary. Also, language also seems to support the distinction. The fact that we esteem those who have resisted a strong desire to do evil is further support. Here Upham's description of such a virtuous person is illustrative of his understanding of how the mind works in such situations:

The wine sparkles before him; his tongue and throat are parched, and the strongest desires arise. But conscience at the same time urges upon him the claims of his family, his country, and his God. After enduring this inward conflict for a season, he resolves, he wills, he acts, and dashes the alluring bowl to the ground. Every one rejoices at, and honours the deed. But it cannot be because the desire has been gratified, but because the person has willed and acted against desire; because, in the opposing array and contest of the powers of his inferior nature, desire has been beaten, and the sense of obligation and duty has triumphed by the award of the only possible umpire, viz., the Will. We evidently make a distinction, in all

such cases, between the cravings of a man's appetite, which necessarily involve desire, and the act of volition, by which the tendency of such desire is counteracted. (II.500)

Upham does not entertain or challenge the Edwardsean possibility that the desire to refrain was simply stronger than the desire to imbibe, making refraining the strongest motive. Further, Upham does not address the possible challenge, along the same lines but assuming Upham's divisions, that conscience was simply the strongest motive in this case. In either case, "the will" as defined by Upham is an utter superfluity, contributing nothing to the process. One can see in this light that the Arminian will, purportedly elevated by libertarian concerns, actually became quite expendable in this scheme of thinking.

Upham did field some similar accusations regarding a quote from Thomas Reid, in which Reid talks about a judge who desires that a criminal live, but still wills him to die. In his defense of Reid, Upham argues that there are "two conflicting principles within him [the judge]; the desire on the one hand...and the feelings of moral obligation on the other." Both of these are in "immediate contact with the will." Given this conflict, only the will is left to arbitrate a decision. Yet, considered from an Edwardsean perspective, one might question whether Upham and Reid here confound the "proper objects of the will." If indeed will and desire are opposed to each other as Upham frames the issue (i.e., the judge desires the person to live [x] and wills the person to die [not x]), then he would be justified in his contention that the two move in opposite directions. But perhaps the proper object of the will in the judges' decision is not the man's death but is rather justice. So the immediate object of the will is justice, and in this will and desire

agree. The “remote” object of will is the life of the criminal, and although the judge desires that the criminal continue to live, he does not actually will it. Upham does not take into consideration such Edwardsean possibilities. Upham offers a litany of such examples, such as the case of a father punishing his child although he desires to refrain, and the case of Abraham offering his son Isaac although he desired to spare his life.

Upham also contended that if will automatically follows desire, the possibility of moral action is excluded, because the feelings of moral obligation are automatically left out of the process. These conclusions are of course true given Upham’s definitions of the mind [as Guelzo (1989) pointed out, Edwards similarly loaded the definitional deck in favor of Calvinism]. Upham also argued that if will and desire are not separate, there is no room for simultaneous experiences of satisfaction and sorrow, as would be the case in the moral conundrums described below.

Finally, Upham argued that scriptural examples support the separation of desire and volition. God is often portrayed as judging his people and yet being grieved by this act, i.e., God’s will and desire conflict. Upham, like Ames, therefore makes an analogy between the divine and the human minds. Man is made in the image of God, “and it is as true of God as of man, that there are elements in his nature which lead him to determine or will that which He does not desire.” God, like humans, possesses a strict distinction between will and desire. Given that God too possess intellect, one might conclude that God also possesses a tripartite soul.

The Laws of the Will

The second part of Upham’s discussion of the will dealt with “the laws of the will.” This is perhaps the most difficult part of Upham’s treatment on will. While

sounding very much like an “Arminian” in the rest of the book, Upham in this section makes several Calvinistic-sounding arguments concerning, for example, the necessity of volitions based upon God’s foreknowledge. Here Upham draws selectively from Freedom of the Will. This section of the book does not represent a shift in thinking, however, for Upham upholds his libertarian/incompatibilist formulations even in his discussion of law, as we shall see. Still, the contrast (and, perhaps, the contradiction) is striking.

Having established the “important principles” of Part I, Upham thought he could move on to cover more controversial issues surrounding the topic, particularly the laws and the freedom of the will. These topics have been characterized by great “difference[s] of opinion” and since they “lie...closely at the root of human accountability” they “are as important as they are interesting” (II.514). These topics are important because:

If a man, for instance, adopts the opinion that there is no such thing as freedom of the will, and that men are the subjects of an irresistible fatality, it will generally follow that his practice will be correspondent to such a belief. Placing an erroneous interpretation on the words of Solomon, that “time and chance happen to all men,” such persons throw themselves upon the wave of their destiny, and are floated onward with an utter disregard of the issue, whether it be good or evil, shameful or glorious. No matter what takes place, say they; it is all from a higher power; and it would be wholly ineffectual and presumptuous in mere insects to prescribe plans for the Deity. The greatest circumspection, the most arduous labours, the most invincible determination, will effect nothing against the allotted and predestined course of events. (II.514).

Upham therefore defines necessity in a manner repugnant to Edwards: as something that runs counter to effort. Indeed, in the conclusion to Freedom of the Will predicted that Arminians would simply “renew” the old arguments against Calvinism, that it posits a “‘fatal,’ ‘unfrustrable,’ ‘inevitable,’ ‘irresistible,’ etc.” necessity. (Conclusion, 1), without actually engaging his arguments. This is what Upham appears to do throughout Mental Philosophy, quoting “President Edwards” for support, and either ignoring his opinions when they disagree, or avoiding mentioning his name when he explicitly disagreed.

Yet, reflective of his Calvinistic background, Upham was also uncomfortable with overconfidence in one’s autonomous abilities, which “leads to a presumptuous self-confidence” (II.515). Such people live unrighteously and autonomously, failing to ask “aid from on high” (Although it is at times unclear why asking for help is necessary when one possesses the power of will as described by Upham). Therefore, in order perhaps to instill some needed humility, Upham went about demonstrating that the will is not an entirely self-sufficient faculty allowing for entirely autonomous action.

Attempting to steer a middle ground between rejecting free will on the one hand and rejecting dependence upon God on the other, Upham attempted to show that the will “has its laws” (II.515). The will’s freedom (which he explicitly assumed) must therefore be understood and interpreted in this light.

Upham’s first argument to this effect was “from the general analogy of nature.” It is clear that the “outward universe” (e.g., planetary motion) and even the mind is controlled by law. Therefore, it would seem to follow that law also applies to volition. Upham approvingly quoted Montesquieu’s Spirit of the Laws to illustrate this point. “All beings have their laws, the Deity his laws, the material world its laws, the intelligences

superior to man their laws, the beasts their laws, man his laws” (II.517). Upham also gathered quotes from Cicero and Hooker to reiterate the point.

Sounding much like Edwards, Upham argued that lawfulness (i.e., necessity) is essential to the divine nature. God is necessarily omnipotent, omniscient, and sovereign. But, “Can that wisdom properly be called omniscient, which knows not what will be the determinations and acts of men in all assignable circumstances, in all time and place?” (II.519). Can God’s government of the world fail to control all things? Upham thought the answer to these questions was obvious. Further, by positing God’s perfect knowledge of the future volitions of all people, Upham entered into territory well trodden by Edwards, who argued that God’s foreknowledge of events implies their necessity. Yet, apparently in tension with this sentiment, is Upham’s previous association of necessity with “irresistible fatality” (II.514).

Given the universality of law, even in the divine nature, it follows that the will itself *must* have its laws. If this were not the case, we would have an “anomaly” on our hands. Reiterating Edwards point concerning the dire consequences of contingency in acts of will, Upham argued that “if the Will acts accidentally or contingently, by which is meant out of and beyond the sphere of law, then the *man* acts contingently.” Upham drew a theological conclusion here, one that flavors Edwards’ entire treatise:

...he stands in a position in which he cannot be controlled even by the Deity himself. He has suffered a revulsion from the parent stock; he has gone off and set up for himself; he has established an empire of his own, where even the Most High must not enter. (II.520).

In Upham’s mind, like Edwards, both common sense and piety demanded that human

beings acknowledge their dependence upon the living God. Yet, how his belief that God “cannot” violate human free will is compatible with the idea that it is evil to establish a place “where even the Most High must not enter” is not clear. By given humanity an Arminian “power of will,” God himself seemed to be establishing a place where he could not enter.

Moral Government

Even in the days of Jonathan Edwards, Calvinists were concerned that the doctrine of God’s moral government of the world was under attack. Upham, again reflecting his Calvinistic background, also desired to hold on to this notion, as opposed to the idea that the world is governed simply by “mere physical control.” He thought there was “perhaps...no subject more important” for the young student. If one accepts that God governs the world, one must also accept that the will is under law. Upham explicitly assumed that his readers did make this assumption. Still he argued that there is “ample evidence” apart from the Bible to prove this doctrine.

The doctrine of the moral government of God meant “that there are some things being governed” (II.522). To be governed, Upham explained, “is obviously to be regulated, guided, or controlled, in a greater or less degree” (II.523). The will is under this regulation; therefore the will is not free to move in any direction. Still, the existence of “a higher or ruling power” implies the existence of an inferior power that is able to obey the demands of the higher power. Here Upham is speaking of a moral ability, or the power of will to obey God’s commands. By insisting that humans must have the moral ability to obey God’s commands in order to be accountable, Upham differed here from Edwards who argued in detail that a natural ability was sufficient to maintain

accountability.

The fact that human beings possess intellect which in turn influences the will not only assures accountability, but also implies the existence of law: the will is lawfully connected to the intellect. Further, consistent with Edwards, Upham noted that “motives” or promises and threatenings imply that the acts of the will are lawfully related to such things. If the will were unable to respond to such promises or threats, it would be impossible for human beings to influence one another for the good. A lack of lawfulness in human volition would render the person unable to predict even her own activity, making it impossible to hold that person accountable for her actions. Randomness and accident in volition would make it impossible even for temptation to influence the will in any predictable pattern, for the predictableness is the very thing that lawlessness in volition denies.

Finally, the denial of lawfulness in voluntary action, i.e., the existence of contingency in voluntary action, undermines the very foundations of “VIRTUE and VICE” (II.528). Since it is a “common maxim” that the virtue or vice of an action is related “to the designs, intentions, or motives with which they originated,” any postulate which excludes such things must undermine virtue and vice. Yet this is precisely what contingency does. Designs, intentions, and motives exert a lawful and predictable influence on the will. Contingency denies that there can be *any* such lawful influence. Therefore the foundations for virtue and vice are eradicated. Upham’s argumentation here is very similar to Edwards’s refutation of contingency, and Upham quotes him to this effect (II.530). Upham’s usage of Edwards is quite selective.

God's Foresight and Volition

Reiterating another argument of Edwards in Freedom of the Will, Upham argued that God's foresight of volitions implies the necessity of these volitions. Upham, like Edwards, assumed that most of his readers embraced the fact of God's foreknowledge, yet he still offered a few arguments to buttress the point: the ideas "which all men" form of God include foreknowledge, and God had designed the mind in such a way that the idea of foreknowledge "arises in it naturally and certainly" given the correct developmental pathway. Upham again proceeds on rational grounds to make theological points. Yet, as he usually did, the last word was given to scripture. Upham shows that the Bible teaches God's omniscience, which implies foreknowledge. Further, since God knows all events, he certainly foreknows the volitions of human beings and the effects of volitions on other volitions. If God foreknows the volitions of people, it follows that these acts of will shall certainly occur, and therefore the will has its laws. There is no contingency or randomness possible in this system. Upham's unwavering determinism is shocking and disarming at this point.

Finally, the fact of divine influence implies that the will has its laws. Both the Bible and "sound philosophy" hold that God "has the power, and, when in his providence he sees fit, exerts the power, of enlightening, purifying, and guiding the minds of men" (II.536). He quotes several passages of scripture to this end. Upham concluded:

All these passages, and others like them, necessarily and clearly imply, although there is no doubt, as we shall see hereafter, of the fact of man's freedom and of the possibility of moral disobedience, that the human mind, nevertheless, is circumscribed and overruled in its operations to some extent; that it is susceptible

of divine influences and guidance; and that it is held, by means of relational forces and adjustments consistent with freedom, in subordination to the all-pervading and transcendent control of the Supreme Intelligence. (II.537)

Despite the general agreement between Upham and Edwards in this section, this particular passage is revealing, and Edwards would have disagreed with it in three ways. First, although Edwards agreed that God's control of human action did not overrule "the fact of man's freedom," Upham defined freedom in the libertarian sense. Edwards argued that such a definition of freedom does not cohere with the affirmation of God's providence. Second, Upham's use of the phrase "to some extent" to describe God's control over the universe would have been unacceptable to Edwards. If God's control is only partial, Edwards might have said, he does not have real control at all. Finally, and relatedly, the idea that God's control of human action somehow "overrules" human activity implies that there are some actions that God does not control, and that his providence entails entering into an autonomous system. In Edwards' universe, all events are determined either by God's efficiency or his permission. Human motives are always involved and always subordinate to this government.

Human Foresight

The laws of the will are also evidenced by the fact that human beings can to some extent forecast their own volitions and the volitions of others. A man goes to New York or Boston on a business trip. The successful completion of this trip and the business it includes "implies the putting forth of hundreds and thousands of volitions" (II.538). Still, the man proceeds on his trip with confidence, believing that he will be able to execute the necessary volitions.

In terms of the volitions of others, one may easily predict the response of “a confirmed and inexorable miser” to a request for charity (II.539). Quoting Paley, Upham noted that humans continually count on the volitions of others:

Every hour of our lives we trust and depend upon others; and it is impossible to stir a step, or, what is worse, to sit still a moment, without such trust and dependence. I am now writing at my ease, not doubting (or, rather, never distrusting, and, therefore, never thinking about it) but that the butcher will send in the joint of meat which I ordered; that his servant will bring it; that my cook will dress it; that my footman will serve it up. (II.540)

Benevolent associations, which depend upon charitable donations for their survival, make plans and predictions for the next year based upon the previous year’s giving: i.e., the volitions of people are in this case also lawful and predictable. Indeed a variety of statistics indicate that human behaviors are patterned. On the basis of these statistics, “...one may predict at the beginning of each year what number will be brought before the criminal tribunals,” for example (II.546).

The Nature of the Will

A consideration of the very nature of the will reveals that the will has its laws. For example, consciousness testifies of a lawful connection between motive and volition. The fact that the will always requires an object is another example. Further, the will can only act in connection with motives, and only when the person believes that the thing in question is actually attainable. Lawfulness is exhibited in those occasions in which passion becomes strong enough “as to encroach upon the domain of the voluntary power, and to bring it into subjection” (II.553). This quote, by the way, is another helpful hint as

to why an Arminian will could be “lost.” By positing that the will has a “domain” that can be invaded, it is possible that that territory can be lost. In the Edwardsean notion, passions, desires, feelings of moral obligation, etc. were all motives subsumed under the blanket term will. The determinants of the will may change from moment to moment and time to time, but the will remains. In Upham’s psychology, it is possible for the will to have “lost its power” (II.554). Upham’s point here, however, is simply that the will has its laws. If the will may at times be taken captive by the passions, it follows that the will is lawfully related to the passions.

Motives

Upham’s final point in demonstrating that the will has its laws centered upon “the law of motives,” or the idea that “the Will never acts...except in connexion with motives” (II.556). Motives are either internal or external. Internal motives include the propensities, the affections and the moral motives. External motives include “all external objects, which excite within us either approbation or disapprobation, joy or sorrow” (II.557). These external objects only affect to the extent that they influence our internal states, and so external motives only influence the will through the mediation of the internal motives. The way in which objects influence individuals is at least partially idiosyncratic, dependent upon the characteristics of the person. In all of these ways, the will is shown to operate in lawful ways.

Motives are not the efficient cause of volition, however, but rather act as “*preparative* causes,” or the “prerequisite antecedents, which furnish the occasions and lay the foundation for acts of the will” (II.561). Motives do not “compel” acts of the will, but rather make volitions possible in the first place. Here Upham sounds like the Chubb

that Edwards attempted to refute in Freedom of the Will. Edwards argued that Chubb actually undermined the role of motives by arguing that volitions are not determined in any predictable way by these motives.

Consistent with his treatment of the sensibilities, Upham divided motives into the natural (or personal) and the moral. The natural motives are found in the natural sensibilities or “the heart” (II.560). Moral motives are found in the moral sensibilities or conscience. More specifically, natural motives are desires, and moral motives are feelings of moral obligation. Not only do these two types of motive influence the will lawfully, but Upham here reiterates his point that it is the conflict between these two types of motive which constitute the drama of the moral life. Upham, purportedly speaking of all humans, infuses this struggle with Christian meaning, further blurring the line between the secular and religious nature of this psychology:

And it is here, in the relative position and strength of these two classes of motives, which sometimes unite in their influence, but are very often antagonistical, that we find the basis of that inward spiritual conflict, upon the right settlement of which depends our harmony with God, and the conscious knowledge that ‘the kingdom of God is within us.’ (II.562)

The fact that salvation depends upon our rightly settling the issue was a most un-Amesian, un-Calvinistic conclusion.

The Freedom of the Will

Having established that the will is subject to law, Upham then turned to establish a seemingly incompatible reality: that the will is free. Showing that these two things are consistent with each other was, of course, one of Edwards’ main goals in The Freedom of

the Will, but he had defined freedom in compatibilist terms, i.e., freedom is being able to act according to desire. To support that notion, Edwards had utilized the distinction between natural and moral causes and necessity, arguing that “common sense” sees natural necessity (e.g., being tied down) as opposed to freedom, but moral necessity (e.g., being inclined in a particular direction by motives) is *not* opposed to freedom. A morally necessary act, such as an intentional murder or lie, is still a morally culpable act.

The first thing Upham does in his section on the freedom of the will is to challenge the dichotomy between natural and moral freedom. Switching the terms a bit, he noted, “it has sometimes been the method of writers on the Freedom of the will to introduce the subject with remarks in illustration of what may be termed *bodily*, in distinction from *mental* freedom.” Bodily freedom, according to Upham is simply freedom from restraint, analogous to Edward’s natural freedom. Still, Upham did not think this notion very helpful in the freedom of the will controversy.

Perhaps, then, mental freedom was the crucial concept for Upham, and he, like Edwards thought that a proper definition of this type of freedom was crucial to resolving the issue. This was not the case. Previous definitional attempts in this area, Upham thought, had “proved unsuccessful,” due in part to the use of incorrect “methods” (II.566). Freedom, like all simple ideas, cannot be defined. It is something we know from the mind alone. “Verbal explanation” of freedom is therefore “utterly futile” (II.567-568). Yet, Upham was confident that he knew the occasion of the idea’s occurrence: “the occasion on which the abstract idea of Freedom is suggested to the intellect, and becomes a part of our knowledge, is nothing else than the mind’s action itself, in those favoured moments when its operations are in fact free.” Upham was

therefore left with a foolproof method of determining the freedom of the will in particular actions: does the mind suggest that a particular act was free? If yes, then it is free. The mind is “so constituted” that this method “always” succeeds (II.569).

Given that freedom is a simple idea and therefore indefinable, Upham argued that attempts at definition are necessarily futile. Hobbes’s definition, that “Liberty is the absence of all impediments to action...” was faulty because the phrase “absence of all impediments” is “obviously synonymous” with the term we are trying to define. Likewise, Buffier’s definition that “Liberty is the disposition a man feels within himself of his *capacity* to act or not to act...at the same moment” was faulty because the word “capacity” does not appear to have a meaning distinct from liberty. Still, it is strange that Upham appeared to choose two fundamentally opposed definitions of freedom to illustrate the idea that definition is meaningless. The first definition seems to advocate a compatibilist definition of freedom, i.e., a person is free if they can act according to desire. The second definition seems to advocate a libertarian definition of freedom, i.e, in any given situation a person may act in different ways. Philosophers today continue to consider these definitions meaningful. And, as we shall see, Upham did actually take a position on this issue.

Upham took Reid to task for using language that leaned in that direction. His point about the difficulty of defining liberty is also better made here:

The definition given by Dr. Reid is this: ‘By the liberty of a moral agent, I understand a POWER over the determinations of his own Will.’ It is difficult to make anything of this definition, because it seems to imply the existence of a Volitional power or Will back of that, whose decisions are the immediate

precursors of our actions. If it do not imply this, then all that is meant is, that the liberty of a moral agent is his POWER to put forth voluntary determinations or acts of the will. And in that case, POWER is the synonymous expression, and, of course, gives us no new light in the case. And if it be not so, the difficulty is not at all removed; for, if we suppose the term power to have a distinct meaning from liberty, that idea or meaning, whatever it may be, is simple and undefinable. (II.570).

Upham closed his preliminary chapter on the freedom of the will on a pietistic note. There is a great difference between forming an abstract notion of liberty on the one hand, and actually possessing liberty on the other. The idea of liberty is the product of pure intellect (the intellect's operation independent of sensory inputs), and is an "intellectual entity." Yet, "this is merely the *idea* of the thing, and not the thing itself" (II.571). So, while the metaphysician may possess sophisticated notions of liberty and yet lack it, the simple believer, lacking the sophisticated notions, may actually possess liberty. Clearly the latter reality is superior to the former. Although this rhetoric is similar to Edwards' at the end of Freedom of the Will (i.e., the weak prevailing over the strong), Edwards had at least attempted to argue for the cogency of his position before using it. Upham here seems to have slipped into a kind of fideism at this point, knowing what he knows because he knows it, and believing what he believes because he believes it. This approach to liberty may have failed to give future libertarians any intellectual ammunition to defend their own libertarianism. One is reminded of James's famous fideistic saying that his first act of free will would be to believe in free will, regardless of his ability to actually defend the position intellectually.

Mental Harmony

Although defining liberty is impossible, it is possible to describe the mental conditions that accompany it (just as it is possible to describe the conditions that limit freedom). Preliminarily, Upham noted that freedom exists in degrees. A person with strong desires for alcohol is less free than a person with weaker desires, yet the one with the stronger desires is still free “so long as he is not absolutely beyond the possibility of self-recovery” (II.575). This person is free and accountable, although less free than others. Here Upham’s description clearly puts him at odds with Edwards, who explicitly argued that strength of desire does not impede freedom. One of the problems with this line of thinking, Edwards wrote, is that it undermines praise and blame. A sinful act performed under strong motives is less culpable than the same act performed under weaker motives. Conversely, a virtuous act performed under strong motives is less praiseworthy than the same act performed under weaker motives. Edwards thought it was *this* way of thinking actually contradicted common sense. Yet this is what Upham seems to be saying here.

Curiously, after affirming that freedom exists in degrees, Upham indicated that his comments on the circumstances of mental freedom were meant to apply to the case of *perfect freedom*, i.e., when freedom exists “*in the highest degree*” (II.575).

People can easily see that “all things are in harmony, or were designed to be so.” Among these many harmonies is the harmony of the mind, in which every part is perfectly adapted to the other parts, each part having its own duties and sphere. “Now, when each part operates in this way...when each power performs its functions...we are then conscious of a liberty in the highest sense of the term” (II.575). Again, it is

“useless” to reason about this experience, only those who have experienced this freedom can know what Upham speaks of here.

Since some powers of the mind are “higher” than others, a person experiences liberty when there is a proper subordination and preponderation among the powers. The will “is the presiding and controlling power” over all of the mental activities (II.576). Acting as the leading advisor and consultant in cases of greatest mental harmony is the conscience, “the viceregent of God in the human breast” (II.576). When the other powers of the soul are submitted to the conscience, the action of the will proceeds smoothly, in liberty. Indeed, “the occasion on which we are conscious of mental freedom in the highest degree is to be found in a condition of the mental acts, conformed to the requirements of the Supreme Being. Here Upham seems to agree with Edwards that the most virtuous acts are those that are most necessary. When all other powers are submitted to the dictates of conscience, the likelihood that conscience will be obeyed is greatest. So, here again Upham would deny the “Arminian” contention that freedom consists in indifference. Yet, Upham’s definitions here shed further light on the trichotomizing of the mind in view of the “loss of will” in American psychology. In the case of perfect freedom and perfect mental harmony, what does the will do? It has nothing to arbitrate since all powers are in proportion and point in the same direction. There is therefore no need for a power of will in the perfectly virtuous person. Interestingly, Upham’s description of Christ immediately following this description of harmony does not include the word will or volition. We learn that Christ’s mind experienced:

entire and perfect harmony. The appetites, the propensities, the affections...never

violated their due boundaries, but always acted in complete uniformity with the law of rectitude in the soul [conscience]. As there was perfect harmony, there was perfect liberty; and as there was liberty, there was peace—even that peace ‘which passeth understanding’ (II.579).

Since this Christ is an example to “us” (again, the “us” is always ill-defined in Upham), one should not rule out perfection. Yet, since Christ’s appetites, propensities and affections were always perfectly in balance, he did not apparently ever need to exert an arbitrating power of will. How imperfect people such as those to whom Upham wrote were to imitate *this* he did not indicate. Upham did indicate that the Holy Spirit could communicate this perfect liberty to the believer, but this too would have overridden any need for a power of will, since the harmony communicated would have overridden any need for an internal arbiter.

Freedom of the Will

Moving from the general notion of liberty to its application to the will, Upham reaffirmed that this liberty, like all liberty, is better known through experience than described verbally. “...It is impossible for me to explain what the Freedom of the Will is in words, but I know what it is in experience and in fact...” (II.583).

Trickier yet is the difficulty of explaining how the will can be “subject to law” and yet free. Sounding like Edwards, Upham contended that the will’s freedom actually depended upon its subjection to law. Without law, the will would be subject to “mere contingency and accident” which would really be no different than “a fatalism of the worst kind, an unintelligent fatalism” (II.584).

Like liberty in general, the will is free when the mind enjoys “perfect harmony in

the other parts of the mind” (II.585). The best example of this is God, who possesses the greatest degree of freedom of will, and the angels too exemplify this freedom. Upham’s description of the angels further illustrates the redundancy and uselessness of the will in such creatures:

The will of angels, and of any and all other orders of holy beings, formed as they are in the image of their Maker, possesses, within the appropriate sphere of its action, the highest degree of freedom. All the various elements which go to constitute them intelligent and moral beings are restricted to their proper place, and operate in their due proportion. Their perceptions, so far as they go, are in perfect accordance with the truth of things. Their emotions are such as God, who takes supreme delight in perfect rectitude, can entirely approve. Every desire which they exercise is in its right place; their love to God is just such as it should be; their love to other holy beings corresponds precisely to the nature of the object towards which it is directed; their aversion to sin and sinful beings is just such, and fully and entirely such, as is appropriate and right; and it is precisely the same in respect to every other emotion and desire. And the consequence is, there is no disturbing force in the neighbourhood of the Will; there is no possible motive to sway it from the line of perfect rectitude; and hence it is true, that their Will, although it always operates in the direction of the highest rectitude and good, is always at liberty; and this liberty exists, too, in the highest possible degree.

(II.585-586)

One might wonder: does the angel really need a will in this situation? If all systems are ‘go,’ does the angel need the will to simply repeat the ‘go’? As was the case with

Upham's Christ, Upham's angels seem to possess a thoroughly useless will. The true usefulness of the Arminian will best appears when the soul is under deep conflict and actually lacks harmony. This, as we shall see, was the use to which James applied his Arminian will.

The best evidence of freedom of the will is found in consciousness. Quoting Dugald Stewart, "Our own free will...we know by consciousness; and we can have no evidence of any truth so irresistible as this" (II.587). Upham noted that some people report experiencing the opposite, i.e., "a consciousness of internal compulsion or slavery." Although Puritans of old frequently complained of experiencing this slavery to sin in their efforts to be holy, as did the apostle Paul in Romans 7, Upham reported that this sort of experience was exceedingly rare, the experience of "thousands and even hundreds of thousands to one" (II.587). Instead of being part of the normal Christian experience, blame for this bondage to sin could be placed squarely on the shoulders of the ones possessing the aberrant experience since their condition is the result of habitual sin. Arminian psychology may therefore also have tended toward a kind of "self-righteousness."

Although Upham thought that motives are necessary for the will to function properly, he rejected the idea that the will is controlled by the strongest motive. The reason for this is that the motives presented to the will are "different in kind" and cannot be directly compared.

Man's Moral Nature

Upham thought that freedom was implied in "man's moral nature." The fact that God gave humans an ability to conceive of wrong and right implies that humans have an

ability to do wrong and right. Further, our feelings of approval or disapproval also imply freedom of the will. If we disapprove of an action that a person committed only later to learn that that person did not have free will in that act, we take back our disapproval. Therefore, disapproval implies a belief in freedom of the will. Our feelings of remorse are also evidence that we believe we could have done better, that we could have done “otherwise” (II.593). Upham’s libertarianism is clear here. Similarly, feelings of obligation imply that we are able to do what we should. Contrary to his Calvinist forebears who thought that people are obligated to keep God’s law even though original sin keeps them from doing so, Upham insisted that “no man ever does or ever can experience in himself the feeling of moral obligation, to do a thing, so long as he feels himself to be actually destitute of liberty to do it” (II.595). “Crimes and punishments” (II.596) are administered on the basis of an assumed liberty of will. Finally, Upham, like Edwards, argues that “common sense” dictates that “men are morally accountable,” and that men possess the freedom requisite to that accountability. Still, Edwards had argued that common sense notions of freedom are actually compatibilist rather than libertarian. Upham does not address this criticism, assuming that the common notions of freedom are libertarian.

Although there are passages in Mental Philosophy that seem to lean in compatibilist directions (II.603), it is clear that overall Upham’s notion of freedom is libertarian or “Arminian.” For example, speaking of the Bible, Upham refers to “all those passages which call upon men to consider their ways,” which “obviously imply that there is no obstruction in the way of their considering and they are free either to do or not to do it” (II.604). Here Upham conveniently forgets to mention favorite Calvinist

passages that speak of humans as “slaves to sin” such as Romans 7 or Ephesians 2.

Upham concludes this section with a statement that Edwards would have agreed with, “in all ages of the world, the doctrine in question [the freedom of the will], with few exceptions, has been fully and universally admitted” (II.605). Yet, by failing to adequately define freedom, Upham was free to confuse issues here. Is the common sense notion of freedom libertarian or compatibilist? In this passage he seemed to assume that the common notion is libertarian, and that the only alternative to libertaianism is hard determinism. He quotes Diderot to this effect, “the word *liberty* is a word devoid of meaning” (II.605). Then rejecting this extreme statement of a determinist, Upham assumed that his version of libertarian freedom was the only acceptable alternative. Upham closes the section with a quote that further confuses issues: what is the source of human liberty, regardless of its nature? Who is the audience?

Let us, then, take that true position, which is clearly pointed out both by reason and the Scriptures, of humble dependence on God on the one hand, and of solemn responsibility for our conduct on the other. It is impossible for us to form too high notions of the power, wisdom, and superintendence of the Deity; nothing is more favourable to virtue than the conviction of his constant presence and oversight; but, at the same time, we ought ever to remember that lie has seen fit to impart to us a moral nature, embracing the elements both of power and liberty; and, whether we account this gift as ten talents, or five, or only one, he holds us responsible for its use, and will punish the slothful servant who hides it in the earth. *“For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not from him shall be taken away even that he*

hath” (II.606).

Consistency of Law and Freedom

Upham turned next to the question of the compatibility of the lawfulness of will and the freedom of the will. Recall that Edwards had reconciled the two by positing a compatibilist notion of freedom: freedom as the opportunity to do as one pleases.

Upham’s task here seems much more complicated. How does one simultaneously affirm a libertarian view of freedom and a deterministic view of the will’s operations? Upham reminded his reader that these topics had been considered as “separate subjects of contemplation” (II.607), and both doctrines proved “beyond doubt” (II.608). With the determination to “go firmly and frankly wherever the evidence conducts,” and to remain “bound by the evidence,” Upham concluded that the truth simply lead him into “a great mystery” (II.609).

Upham was convinced that he was not embracing a contradiction. “If we define freedom to be an exemption from law, then no doubt the proposition of the will’s subjection to law implies the exclusion of liberty” (II.610). Yet Upham did not believe that he had made the will exempt from law, even though he did make its final pronouncements finally inexplicable on the basis of law (i.e., we know the will embraces either desire or feeling of moral obligation, but the ultimate determination is not final until the autonomous will makes its choice).

Since he thought there was no contradiction, he felt comfortable arguing that the issue was a mystery. This was nothing to be ashamed of: the human mind has many things that it cannot fully understand, and it is a sign of wisdom to admit when one runs against these limitations. For support Upham quoted Locke:

I own freely to you the weakness of my understanding, that, though it be unquestionable that there is omnipotence and omniscience in God our Maker, and though I cannot have a clearer perception of anything than that I am free, yet I cannot make [meaning undoubtedly that he could not explain and clear up in all respects how it should be so] freedom in man consistent with omnipotence and omniscience in God, *though I am as fully persuaded of both as of any truth I most firmly assent to*; and therefore I have long since given off the consideration of that question, resolving all into this short conclusion, that if it be possible for God to make a free agent, then man is free, though I see not the way of it. (II.611)

Upham could not help but interject his ecstatic opinions at this point.

...in the midst of a universe under the government of God, where the minutest things are under his superintendence and control, it seems to me not only a thing possible to be done, but that it is one of his greatest works, that He has created a being who is formed and sustained with law as the basis of his existence, and at the same time with the birthright and the glorious inheritance of liberty. (II.611-612)

One possible understanding of Upham's universe is that God has control and yet doesn't have total control, and the human will is subject to law and yet is not completely subject to law. Whether this ability to reconcile apparent contradictions was to God's credit is an open question.

Upham reminded his reader of the limitations of human knowledge, and of other mysteries of the Christian religion such as the resurrection and the union of body and soul, in order to make room for his potentially dissatisfying reconciliation.

Although Upham was very clear about what he meant by the will being subject to law, he was less clear about what he meant by freedom. I have portrayed him as a libertarian, however, citing the various passages in which he says that the ability in any given situation to will more than one way is an instance of freedom. Yet Upham sometimes used compatibilist language, and at other times, used the language of spiritual freedom, the freedom that comes from God. Upham closed his discussion of the compatibility of law and freedom by slipping back to the notion of spiritual freedom:

...the truest and highest philosophy is to be found in that passage of Scripture, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure.’ It expresses the great truth, and we may add, the great mystery, of the harmonious combination of power and dependence. And it is the same in other things as in religion, that, if we will act for ourselves under the impulse of right feelings, our Maker will take compassion upon us, and act in our behalf; that, if we faithfully do our duty, God will be as faithful to help us. (II.616-617).

Yet even in the case of spiritual assistance, this quote shows that God’s intervention depends upon the free choice of the believer. This passage is also interesting in that Upham applies New Testament scriptures which the Puritans would have thought applied only to the church to his entire readership. Here Upham, again following his Puritan forebears, blurs the lines between religious and secular concerns.

Slavery of the Will

Reiterating his point that mental freedom is only known through consciousness, yet is occasioned by mental harmony, Upham argued that the precise opposite of this

harmony will occasion mental slavery. “Whenever one power overleaps its bounds...we are conscious of a want of freedom” (II.618). For example, if one’s life is endangered, the fear may become so excessive and controlling in relation to the other powers of the mind that the person fails to keep a promise made earlier. Upham notes that we tend to forgive that person because “the individual is not himself responsible” given the imbalance in his mind (II.621). The same sort of effect takes hold in cases of torture, strong appetites (such as the appetite for alcohol), inordinate ambition, indulgence of the passions, and other occasions.

As long as the balance and harmony among the various mental powers is not totally destroyed, moral accountability remains intact. “If we permit the undue and unholy exercise of any appetite or passion, we are indeed ENSLAVED...by such appetite or passion; but we are not, therefore, removed beyond...guilt” (II.630). As long as “*any powers of right judgment and resistance*” remain, the person may still be held accountable for his enthrallment. But, in the most extreme cases, when these powers of judgment and resistance are finally destroyed, so too is moral accountability nullified.

The Indomitable Power of the Will

In Upham’s opinion, the concepts of freedom and power had frequently been confounded. This was a major source of confusion in the controversy over the will. In order to proceed rightly, the two things need to be kept separate. Upham attempted to demonstrate the difference between freedom and power through several examples, including that of the child who has great mental freedom yet limited power when compared with, say, a philosopher. A virtuous person will have more freedom than a less virtuous person, but the less virtuous person may have more mental power. Further,

since consciousness allows us to form “distinct ideas” (II.637) of power and freedom, they must really be distinct. Language also testifies to this difference. Moral agency also implies mental power, i.e., the power to carry out the duties to which we are obliged.

Power, like freedom, is a simple idea and is therefore indefinable and known only through consciousness. Although complex ideas may be “chimerical,” God has designed the mind so that its simple ideas reveal truth about existence, so our knowledge of power is therefore a trustworthy intuition. Power is not a faculty of mind but is rather “diffused...through all its faculties” (II.642). And humanity, being made in the image of God, is possessed of a power of the same kind, albeit of limited degree.

Power of the Will

Since power is “not only predicable of the mind in a general way, but...is predicable of its parts...” (II.644), Upham thought it appropriate to consider the power of the will itself. Every mental ability is associated with power. Certain people have strong powers of perception, others have strong powers of memory. Therefore it follows that there must be “an innate energy” associated with the will also.

We “feel and know” that our wills have a degree of power (II.645). Volitions appear to come from within us; they do not seem to be wrought within us “by an extraneous cause.” We have a feeling of effort when we will something. We feel there is an energy we put forth. Consciousness therefore “assures us that the action of the Will...truly originates in its own power. It wills, because it has the power to will.” Upham quoted Shakespeare to this effect, “The cause is in my *Will*; I *will* not come” (II.645). Once again, Upham seems to use the language of self-determination here: The will acts because it wills to act. And the energy for the act is found within the will itself.

The power of the will is manifested in the fact that when different “trains of thought” pass through the mind, we possess the ability to attend to certain aspects of that train, and to ignore other aspects. Although association pulls the train in certain directions, the power of the will can pull the train in other directions. This innate power of the will is also manifested during certain difficult situations, such as “hunger and thirst, and torture, and exiles, and death...” (II.646). In all these situations the power of will has often been seen helping people to maintain “a most astonishing fortitude and calmness” (II.647). Some famous people in history were distinguished by their great powers of will, such as Howard, Columbus, Cromwell, and Napoleon. These men shared a great “intensity of determination” (II.647-648) in their endeavors, manifesting the power of will.

When people exhibit great patience when undergoing suffering, or when they exercise control over their tempers or other violent feelings, the power of will is manifest. So too does the steadfast execution of “some general plan,” complete with “fixedness of purpose” and “unalterable resolution” manifest this power of will. As an example of this Upham discusses the case of “a poor Irish girl” who leaves her country to seek wealth for her family. The girl is confronted with many obstacles, but her “filial piety” (II.654) is finally rewarded in the end. The unclear point here is why the Irish girls’ behavior cannot be understood as being due to strong domestic affections as Upham described in his volume on the Sensibilities. Here again, the will seems a redundancy. So too this is the case in his examples of those who resisted the slave trade, or the first settlers in New England. Perhaps their desires for these various objects were simply very strong. What the power of the will adds to this is unclear.

Fittingly, Upham offered an explanation of what the phrase “self-determining power of the will” at this point:

The self-determining power of the will, as we understand it, cannot be made to mean anything more or otherwise than this, that the will, possessing, in the fact of its own existence, and as an element of that existence, the attribute of power, does of itself, in view of the different and sometimes conflicting motives around it, arbitrate, determine, or decide among them. In other words, and philosophically more exact, developing itself in action at its appropriate time, and standing central in the midst of the motive forces around it, and by virtue of that which is in itself, and not extraneous to itself, it simply acts in the time of its action; it simply decides in the time of its decision; and in this simplicity of action, with motives before it, and with nothing behind it but the sustaining power of God, it fulfils the great unitive and executive function which God and nature have assigned it.

(II.657)

Whatever ambiguity there was concerning Upham’s view of the self-determination of the will, this passage certainly clears it up.

Individual Differences in the Power of the Will

If it is true that there is “an original and substantive efficiency, lodged in the Will,” Upham thought it only made sense that “we should find degrees and diversities in this power” among individuals (II.658). Some individuals, Upham thought, manifest a “constitutional weakness of will.” These people exhibit “a feebleness of resolution, a sort of vacillancy...between one thing and another” (II.658). If this is the case, then our expectations of these individuals ought to be adjusted accordingly. We don’t require

people of limited intellect to produce “a Principia,” so why ought we require steadfastness of purpose from the weak-willed? The “great Dispenser of mental gifts” (II.659) does not ask for a harvest where he has not sown. And some weak-willed individuals have been given great intellectual gifts, such as Cicero. Upham’s tone in this section is not as judgmental as it is compassionate; he seems to feel for the weak-willed. Nevertheless, governmental leadership requires more than intellect, and Upham would not recommend the weak-willed for this type of service.

Just as there are those lacking in the power of the will, there are those who possess great power of will. These people have a “marked decision and vigour of the will” (II.662). Examples here included Archbishop Cranmer:

In an unguarded and unhappy hour he had subscribed to doctrines which he did not believe; an act which he afterward deeply repented of, as the greatest miscarriage of his life. And when he was subsequently led to the stake, he stretched out the hand which had been the instrument in this false and discreditable subscription, and without betraying, either by his countenance or motions, the least sign of weakness or even of feeling (such are the very words of the historian), he held it in the flames till it was entirely consumed. (II.663)

Upham also marveled at the energy of will exhibited by certain people in “imminent danger of death” (II.664), and by the Christian martyrs. It is clear in his discussion that he admires these exemplars of willpower. When one reads “the history of Martyrdoms” one cannot help but be moved by “the moral sublimity of their fixed and immutable resolve” (II.665). He also seemed to admire the public speaker whose control over the self was total. When these speakers need to, “they suddenly call to their aid the

supremacy of the volitional power.” When they do so “all outward agitation ceases; a calm succeeds to the tempest; there is nothing perceptible but a quiet dignity and unruffled self-possession” (II.668). Similar self-control is exhibited by the man serving in the military, who “stands unmoved and calm in the day of battle.” Upham concluded his consideration of differences in the power of the will with a word of admonition to those whom God had given great power of will. Just as one given a great intellect must use that to serve God, so too one with a great will must also inquire “what our adorable Maker would have us to do” (II.671).

Consistency of Character

Upham next turned to apply these foregoing analyses toward the issue of character formation. It is interesting that he chose the attainment of a consistent character, “which is...one of the most interesting as well as important mental traits” (II.671), as his focus at this point. Consistency of character is a broader concept than individual decisions, having to do with behavior over “a long series of events” (II.672). This trait is opposed to the “restlessness,” “uncertainty,” and “inequality of temper” which is found in some. Upham criticized “Lord Bacon” for inconsistency and weakness of will. So too he discussed the connection between weakness of will and inconsistency in belief. Despite these things, Upham thought that “it is in the power of all” to resist these impulses associated with inconsistency and to develop more consistent characters. Failure to do so minimizes one’s own usefulness in life.

Upham’s comparison of the differences between persons of steady and unsteady character further reveals the blending of religious and republican goals so typical of nineteenth century America (Noll, 2002). While the plans, beliefs and affiliations of the

“inconsistent man” change from day to day, “the consistent man is directly the reverse” (II.673). He is cautious in making plans and in embracing beliefs, but sticks to them after the choice is made. More importantly, the consistent character sticks to his moral principles even when doing so hurts. Because of his great virtue, he maintains peace and happiness even when monetary wealth is lacking.

Upham picked two Revolutionary leaders to illustrate his point. George Washington’s reputation was spotless because of his constant character. His powers of mind were in harmonious balance. “He had but one rule of conduct, that of an enlightened moral sense” (II.675). Lafayette was also worthy of great admiration. His consistency of character flowed from his steadfast commitment to the ideals of liberty and order. Although he was subject to the most tumultuous changes in his outward circumstances, his commitment to “the same noble object” (II.675) did not change.

Just as consistency had beatified the lives of these political leaders, so too consistency also beatifies the religious life. There is “perhaps” no greater requirement in the Bible than consistency of character. “Again and again, Christians are commanded to watch, to stand fast, to continue grounded and settled in the faith...” (II.676). A person of consistent character has “*self-possession or self-government*” (II.681). This person is in control of the passions and quietly accepts the difficulties and struggles of life without complaining. In addition to having “some great objects before him...towards which his efforts tend,” he also is able to resist the inevitable temptations and obstacles that would otherwise pull him off-course. Upham clearly thought this steadiness of purpose throughout life was one of the most admirable traits one could possess, and that “if we would possess the rich reward and the high honor of a consistent course through life,” we

must “endeavor to understand the nature of the will, and the means of strengthening and regulating it” (II.681).

Discipline of the Will

Upham was concerned that books on “mental discipline” focused too much on the intellectual powers (perhaps reflecting nineteenth century intellectualism). The affections had been neglected to some extent, and the will neglected even more. Certainly this was due in part to the general ignorance and misunderstanding that had accompanied previous studies. But, given the advances contained in Upham’s system, and the pressing need for consistency of character, it followed that the discipline of the will was an endeavor to be seriously pursued. Upham was glad to find an ally in the “eminent writer” Good, who thought that discipline of the will was the great duty of the “moralist” and educator, “since it is designed by nature to be the governing power, and to exercise an absolute sway over the rest...” (II.685).

Recounting his previous assertion that mental harmony and balance is prerequisite to proper activity, Upham thought that most individuals do not possess this balance. Instead, “the parts of the human mind...exhibit at the present time but too mournful evidence of a dislocated and jarring movement” due to inordinate desires such as “the love of the world...contesting against the love of God and of heavenly things” (II.686). Given this sorry state of things, Upham noted that the will, which was designed by God to control the entire mental structure, is often following the lead of these disproportionate and unsubmitted passions. “...This is a state of things which ought not to be” (II.686).

Yet how does one remedy this difficult situation? The Puritan Christianity of Ames and Edwards had answered this question in terms of conversion and growth in

grace. Upham even framed the issue in similar terms: “How shall we redeem ourselves from our voluntary thralldom, and walk forth in the light of our own conscience and in the smiles of an approving God, regenerated and free?” (II.686). Although Ames and Edwards may have objected to the way the question was posed, there could be no more important question in their minds than the question of redemption.

Upham’s answer would have struck Ames and Edwards as Pelagian. The first step that a person should take is “to keep the appetites, propensities, and passions in due subjection.” The overindulgence of any appetite or propensity can lead not only to the enthrallment of the will, but the entire mind as well. “If, therefore, we duly estimate the great object of securing to the will a free, unperplexed, and vigorous action, we shall seriously endeavor, by the use of all those means which have a relation to a result so desirable, to restrain every appetite, propensity, and passion within its due bounds” (II.688). Whenever these sentimentive impulses assert themselves beyond their proper boundaries, “let them be subjected to a rigid supervision and repression.” Like James, he warned that gratifying these desires just once makes it more difficult to repress them the next time: “it is in their very nature, when they have once transgressed, to insist on repeated and continued transgression” (II.688). In addition to repressing the bad, Upham added that the good impulses should be gratified, including “those of a purely religious kind.”

Two things about Upham’s solution to the problem of the sinful will would have been particularly troublesome to Ames and Edwards. First, perhaps, might have been “the great object” of all these more endeavors. Instead of a God-centered goal (i.e., the glory of God, or obedience to God’s commandments, or love to Christ), the great object

of Upham's moral strivings was himself. He simply desired to develop his own willpower. Just as he had earlier rhapsodized the virtues of the person in total control of his emotions, so too Upham desired to have complete control of his passions so that he might engage in "free, unperplexed, and vigorous action." While Upham had at certain points in his Mental Philosophy named God as the great moral object of volition, here willpower is the great object of veneration. He thought it worthwhile to expend great energy in "securing the great object of freeness, vigour, and rectitude in the mental operations..." (II.688). The will was becoming both the subject and the object of American moral psychology.

Perhaps the second point that would have troubled Ames and Edwards is Upham's indifference toward the means of obtaining a strong will. As quoted above, he encouraged "the use of all those means which have a relation to a result so desirable," but did not specify the means. Ames, on the other hand, spent a great deal of time specifying the means to the end of worshipping God: preaching, prayer, sacraments, and church discipline. For Upham, the church was useful if it could lead to the development of an indomitable will. Yet, such Calvinistic means of grace designed to remind the sinner of his or her weakness on a weekly basis were probably not the sort of thing Upham had in mind.

Upham's apparent intoxication with the strong will manifested itself in a strange way: looking down upon individuals that Christians had historically admired. Upham discusses the English poet and hymn writer William Cowper, a person well-known for his bouts with depression. Upham thought that "while in some respects" Cowper was a great man, in other respects "he sunk...to the grade of infantile weakness..." Upham did not

seem to have patience for weakness. Even the apostle Peter is chastised for his “often strangely anomalous and inconsistent” life. Both Cowper and Peter were weakened by “the passion of fear.” To avoid looking like William Cowper and the apostle Peter, Upham had some words of advice:

We repeat it, therefore, that we should carefully study the nature of the appetites, propensities, and affections; we must make them the objects of a patient and assiduous culture; we must, in particular, subject them to a strict supervision and control; otherwise, in some unexpected hour, they will arise in their might, and, in defiance of the clamours of conscience and the struggles of the volitional power, will bring the whole man under their dominion. (II.691)

In view of this passage, and the passages preceding, there appears, then, to be a kind of self-righteousness in the Victorian psychology of Thomas Upham. The sense of strong moral duty, combined with sense that this moral duty is well within the ability of a moralist willing to work hard enough at it, created a situation in which moral victory could easily issue in pride, and moral failure in great shame. William James seems to have shared that great burden and therefore wavered between “strenuous” moral effort on the one hand, and an “antinomian impulse” in which he desired to simply be set free from the demands of such an unforgiving universe, on the other.

Indicative of the intellectualism that prevailed in nineteenth century moral philosophy (Hoopes), Upham indicated that “a prominent and leading view” of the subject of the discipline of the will had to do with controlling the intellect. He had earlier noted that he thought the affections and especially the will had been neglected here, but conceded that “among the most available and decisive methods of aiding and regulating

the action of the will...[is] the illumination of the intellect” (II.694). Although he reminded his readers that the effects of the intellect on the will are always mediated through the sensibilities, he still thought it true that “as a general thing...the will corresponds to the intellect; the action of the will is in a line with the action of the intellect; and changes in the intellect will almost necessarily induce corresponding changes in the sentient and volitional parts of the mental constitution” (II.696).

Approaching once again that vague line between evangelicalism and secularism, Upham’s first example to illustrate the problems associated with an un-enlightened intellect was “indifference to the spread of the Gospel” (II.695).

Hundreds of millions of the human race are living and dying without any of those aids and consolations which a knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ is calculated to impart. And yet it is universally admitted, both in consideration of the reasonableness of the thing and of the commands of Scripture, that it is a duty incumbent on Christian nations to see that blessed Gospel sent to them without delay. But why is it that so few feel in heart what they acknowledge speculatively, and that almost none are found to offer themselves as personal labourers in this great and glorious work? It is because (at least this is one great and prominent reason, if it be not the only one) their inquiries have been too limited; they have been satisfied with generalities and abstract truisms, without carefully and seriously estimating, even in a single instance, the extent of that degradation and suffering which are incidental to the state of heathenism. (II.694-695).

Indicative of the times also is Upham’s second example of the effects of a lack of

thoughtfulness: complacency about the “dreadful atrocity” of war (II.695).

Many of the great themes encountered in this consideration of the psychology of Thomas Upham are found in the last few pages of Mental Philosophy, in which he considers the importance of habit and religion in strengthening the will. Recall that Upham’s treatment of the power of the will contains a subtle shift concerning the moral object of volition. Upham seems in these pages to be obsessed with the cultivation of the will itself as an end in itself. He associates this power of will with personal *strength*. Indeed, he recommends that his students always obey “that higher power within us, the Moral Sense” so that they may become “tower[s] of strength” (II.698). Virtue is worthy of pursuit because “*rectitude is strength*” (II.699). So too “the great principle or law of habit” is worth learning because it can greatly increase the power of the agent. “...We do not fully understand the secret of our own strength till we have learned...” the power of the law of habit. In a lesson that William James would share with his students, Upham taught his own that “every act of the Will in this right direction gives vivacity and strength to the succeeding act” (II.703).

Upham closed his consideration of the topic of the will in what might have seemed an idolatrous fashion to Ames and Edwards: a consideration of how religion can *serve* the great “object” of the will. All things “of a religious nature” (such as God’s attributes, the love of Christ, the mercies of the gospel, the shortness of time on earth), can be used to strengthen the will. Indeed, religious sources of truth can impart “a strength which can be derived from no other source” (II.703). Certainly it is true that “other considerations” may impart a measure of “strength” to the will, “but those of religion give *more*” (II.704).

Summary and Conclusion

Given the crucial role that the structure of the mind played in Upham's psychology, it is not surprising that he began his consideration of the will reaffirming the importance of the tripartite approach: the mind is composed not of intellect and will, but intellect, *sensibilities*, and will. In this context he expresses the "Arminian impulse," reaffirming the godlike nature of the human will, that it is an uncaused cause of action, an original source of human efficiency.

Secondly, Upham affirmed that the will operates in discernibly predictable ways: i.e., the "has its laws." He reiterates several Edwardsean arguments to this effect, such as the notion that God's foreknowledge implies necessity. Upham's point in this section is quite simple and does not need great elaboration. The notion that the will is determined is, of course a continuity with Edwards, and can be seen, in part, as a vestige of his Calvinistic background. Nevertheless, the discussion does not truly advocate the thoroughgoing determinism of Edwards. Upham, for example, argued in this section that the will is lawfully connected to motives and is not contingent, but it is significant that Upham does not say the will is determined by motives.

Upham argued that the will is free. It is true, however, that some acts of the will are freer than others. Although Upham thought that the will was self-determined and free to arbitrate among different motives, Upham curiously defined freedom in such a way as to make the will non-essential in moral activity. Freedom takes place when there is harmony among the parts of the soul. So if the intellect and the natural and moral sensibilities all point in the same direction, the person is undivided, and the will is free. Yet, one may wonder, if all systems say go, why do you need another faculty to say go?

Upham insists that Christ's soul was harmonious, and, tellingly, Upham did not seem to have much of a place for will in Christ's psychology.

The final section of Upham's section on the will dealt with the "powers of the will," in which Upham reveals a real respect for human willpower. The treatment becomes so expansive at times that Upham seems to engage in a form of will worship. Although he is compassionate towards the poor souls with little willpower, he marvels at those with fortitude. In Upham's psychology the will becomes an object of veneration itself. Will is both the subject and the object of moral activity, the end of its own actions. Upham even mentions ways that religion can be brought into the service of the will, a contention that Ames and Edwards might have found idolatrous.

The irony of Upham, then, was that he spoke of will as a godlike power; an uncaused cause like God. He venerated the powers of willpower arguing that religion can serve the will. Yet, in the process, he reduced the sphere of the will so substantially that a holy person would not even need one. Remember, the great use of the will in Upham's system was to mediate the conflict between natural desire and feelings of moral obligation. In a holy person, no such conflict existed. The will, at least in this case, became a redundancy.

USE II:

WILLIAM JAMES'S PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY

“...We believe that our autonomy in the midst of nature depends on our not being pure effect, but a cause...”

William James, *Principles of Psychology*, (I.447-448).

INTRODUCTION TO USE II

A central assumption of this dissertation is that American psychology did not begin in 1890. As Evans (1984) has noted, psychological thought in America before William James was more “fertile and active” than one might imagine. “To deny that there was a psychological tradition in the United States before James is like denying such a tradition in Germany before Wilhelm Wundt, in France before Alfred Binet, or in England before James Ward” (p. xliii). It was not, however, Evans’ goal to show precisely *how* James’s text might be a part of that American tradition.

Evans (1984) did explain what made James’s psychology *different* than the indigenous psychology, however. The thing that separated James from his American forebears was his rejection of faculty psychology. “American society,” at the time, “...was still saturated with concepts of mental powers and faculties” (p. xliv). James’s job was to apply the new naturalistic approach to the American context and to debunk the old Cartesian notion of the soul. In addition to an openness to experimental science, James also moved psychology into its modern period by rejecting the notion of a substantial soul, yet still arguing that one could speak of a self which was rooted not in a soul but in the brain itself (p. lviii). One thing that Evans does not mention is *why* the rejection of the faculty approach might have struck terror into the hearts of Americans, and why James made such a valiant attempt to find a place for the self.

Coon (2000), I think, helps to answer this question. James’s project was to forge a replacement for the outdated notion of the soul in a secularizing and industrializing society. The soul had served several vital functions: it was, among other things, the

center of human identity and had made the hope of eternal life plausible. More than this, and, from the perspective of this dissertation, more importantly, the soul had “account[ed] for the ability of the mind to *act* and not merely be a passive receptacle” (Coon, 2000, p. 89). The notion of soul has supported a belief in:

...the *activity* of the mind, especially its ability to attend selectively and to chose among alternatives. Selective attention was an ability that James thought had been crucial to our evolutionary survival, and it was a hard thing to explain without recourse to a will and an underlying soul or some such source of activity that could direct the attention. (p. 94)

Unable to abide by the deterministic approach of the associationists who made mind passive, James needed some replacement for the soul in order to defend human efficiency. Coon notes that James’s convictions were such that in his chapter on the will, James was “simply unable to resist resurrecting the soul” (p. 94), and slipped back into the usage the older term.

James’s desire to protect human efficiency is explained to some extent when one consider the way in which the “Arminian impulses” of American society were being challenged in the post-Civil war era. Upham’s text, thoroughly shaped by the “Arminian impulse” which had come to characterize American psychology and theology before the Civil War, would continue to be used in American colleges into the 1880s and 1890s. This meant that there were *some* traditional sources that preached the Americanized gospel of God, country, family, and self-determination (see also Delbanco, 1999). But the War had changed things considerably. Although the Union had been preserved, the overwhelming violence and unspeakable toll of countless human lives had wreaked

havoc upon the beliefs of many Americans (Menand, 2001). One of these beliefs, I believe, was that precious “Arminian” belief in human efficiency.

Bennett Ramsey’s (1993) contextualization of William James’s thought expresses very well how the intellectual changes after the Civil War challenged the Arminian impulse. Consistent with the idea that the Arminian impulse had become dominant prior to the Civil War years²² (when, as noted above, Upham’s text dominated in American colleges), Ramsey describes American culture before the 1860s as an “anxious bench” in which Americans attempted to live out “the gospel of strenuous activity” (p. 18). Possessed of self-determined wills, Americans could pursue their destinies with confidence that they had a God-given but autonomous power to achieve those ends. After the War, the metaphor changed to “...the S-shaped couch by the parlor window...its curvilinear sweep, mirroring the invalid body” (p. 18). Americans were beginning to feel quite *inefficient*.

As Ramsey (1993) explains it, America “had lost its sense of ultimate grounding, its understanding that American life was well founded” (p. 19), and “there was agreement that ideas of societal order had become all to indefinite” (p. 21). There was, “a decline in clarity of the point and direction of individual life” (p. 22). This anomie was exacerbated by industrial forces and natural science which came to challenge the idea that humans were masters of their own destinies. Human power could no longer be understood as

²² Another quick way to justify the proposition that the “Arminian impulse” became dominant prior to the Civil War is the ascendancy of Methodism in early nineteenth century America. Mark Noll’s (2002) definition of “Arminianism” reads like this: “*Arminianism*: For this book, the doctrines of Methodists who held with John Wesley that God gave prevenient grace (a grace coming before full salvation) to all people so that original sin could be overcome and all could make a free choice for God. Wesleyan Arminianism also included a belief in Christian perfection, or that it was possible for believers to be liberated from all known sin” (p. 563). Although I use the term “Arminian impulse” in a much broader sense in this dissertation, it is significant that the fastest growing denomination (between the years 1770 to 1860) and the denomination which had the most churches in 1860 should be *equated* with Arminianism by a leading historian of American religious thought (p. 162).

“sovereign;” human activity “ceased to be defined in terms of spontaneous action.” Instead, “human effort was conceived as mechanical, as automatic rather than creative” (p. 22).

In view of these things, Ramsey describes what I would interpret as a loss of confidence in American’s own “Arminian impulses.” “With technical rationality gaining ascendancy in the culture, the consent of the human will to do or not, seemed beside the point.” Just as Upham’s text continued to be used after the Civil War, “...the culture continued to hold out images of self-determination...” (p. 23) but the forces of mechanization and industry undermined these Arminian vestiges. In short, Ramsey sums, the culture was suffering from a loss of the sense of self-determination (p. 25). The American will was in danger of being lost.

The Arminianized Protestant worldview was crumbling among elites. Although Ramsey does not explicitly claim these late nineteenth century things as vestiges of the Arminian impulse (although his comments about self-determination imply it), he does note that old Calvinist notions of “the relationship between human and divine activity” were no longer tenable. Further, there were no other theological systems available to replace Calvinism: “...there was a common recognition that theological structures of belief were completely unable to shore up the self.” Just as the forces of nonsectarianism tended to whittle away the traditional components of the psychology of volition, so too the forces of industrialization and mechanization left nothing but a vestigial Arminian sensibility: “what appeared to be left was a religious heart without imagination, patterns of piety without convincing expression or authority” (Ramsey, 1993, p. 30). Although the old psychology of Upham and others continued to offer cultural resources for

continued reassurance that human beings did possess a real efficiency, it was also true that the European version of psychology was challenging these very notions. It was in this context of cultural and spiritual crisis that William James set about his project of validating the Arminian impulses that so many Americans had embraced.

Just as Coon (2000) noted that James's theorizing on the self had helped to preserve space for human efficiency, Ramsey (1993) also sees James's psychological project as having to do with the preservation of human self-determination in light of the seemingly overwhelmingly deterministic forces in play. Indeed, I think Ramsey's second chapter ("Reweaving the Self") confirms the basic assertions of the chapters that are to follow. Just as I argue that one of James's major goals was to face the deterministic postulates of European psychology head-on and to emerge with a fresh justification of the Arminian impulse, Ramsey also finds James validating notions of self-determination throughout the Principles of Psychology (Ramsey, 1993, pp. 42, 47, 52). The chapters that follow, then, aim to support the contention that William James's "secular" psychology textbook shared the 'Arminian' goals of the indigenous psychological tradition.

CHAPTER X

“THE CONQUESTS OF PHYSIOLOGICAL THEORY”

AND THE CLAIMS OF HUMAN EFFICIENCY

Thomas Upham died the same year that William James became an instructor of physiology at Harvard, in 1872 (Salter, 1986; Myers, 1986). While Thomas Upham had the luxury of making only superficial note of physiological developments in his widely adopted Mental Philosophy, William James would begin his professional life immersed in the burgeoning field of physiology. As one who shared Upham’s Arminian conviction that morality requires a power of original efficiency, James knew that the lazy days of American mental philosophy were over. If the Arminian impulse were to survive, the mounting threat of European physiology would need to be confronted. And James, with a little help from other American friends with similar concerns (such as G. T. Ladd—see Mills, 1969), was just the one to do it. The importance of this project to James is evidenced by the fact that the first five chapters of The Principles of Psychology were given in part to meeting this threat to the free Arminian will. This chapter, then, is a commentary and analysis of James’s attempt to soften the blow of European physiological theory for an American and ‘Arminian’ audience.

The Scope of Psychology

James defined the subject matter of psychology in strictly psychic terms, “Psychology is the Science of Mental Life, both of its phenomena and their conditions.” Later in the Principles, James would use the term consciousness, but early in the

Principles he simply gave examples of mental phenomena: “The phenomena are such things as we call feelings, desires, cognitions, reasonings, decisions, and the like...” He further noted that the two leading approaches to studying the mind, or consciousness, faculty psychology and associationist psychology, neglected the “conditions” of mental life, particularly the physiological conditions, of mental life. Noting that “unifying” these diverse mental states is difficult: “...their variety and complexity is such as to leave a chaotic impression on the observer,” James distanced himself from faculty psychology, and, by implication, the indigenous psychological tradition (including Thomas Upham) thus:

The most natural and consequently the earliest way of unifying the material was, first, to classify it as well as might be, and, secondly, to affiliate the diverse mental modes thus found, upon a simple entity, the personal Soul, of which they are taken to be so many facultative manifestations. Now, for instance, the Soul manifests its faculty of Memory, now of Reasoning, now of Volition, or again its Imagination or its Appetite. This is the orthodox ‘spiritualistic’ theory of scholasticism and of common-sense. (I.1)

Yet, implicitly, James affirmed that American mental philosophy had at least defined psychology correctly, i.e., as the science of mental life. James also distanced his psychology from European associationist psychology:

Another and a less obvious way of unifying the chaos is to seek common elements *in* the divers mental facts rather than a common agent behind them, and to explain them constructively by the various forms of arrangement of these elements, as one explains houses by stones and bricks. The ‘associationist’ schools of Herbart in

Germany, and of Hume the Mills and Bain in Britain, have thus constructed a *psychology without a soul* by taking discrete ‘ideas,’ faint or vivid, and showing how, by their cohesions, repulsions, and forms of succession, such things as reminiscences, perceptions, emotions, volitions, passions, theories, and all the other furnishings of an individual’s mind may be engendered. The very Self or *ego* of the individual comes in this way to be viewed no longer as the pre-existing source of the representations, but rather as their last and most complicated fruit.

(I.1-2)

The problem with faculty psychology is that it explained psychological phenomenon simply by referring these phenomenon back to a reified, self-determined faculty:

Any particular cognition, for example, or recollection, is accounted for on the soul-theory by being referred to the spiritual faculties of Cognition or of Memory. These faculties themselves are thought of as absolute properties of the soul; that is, to take the case of memory, no reason is given why we should remember a fact as it happened, except that so to remember it constitutes the essence of our Recollective Power. (I.2)

An irony of rejecting the faculty psychology approach, however, was that James was relinquishing what had become for the indigenous psychological tradition the main source of human power or efficiency (Kosits, 2002c). In the psychology of Thomas Upham, faculties served as springs of action (in the sensibilities) and of libertarian freedom (in the will). The question then became: where would a secular Arminian like William James find the self-determined efficiency that he so desired? The ironic answer is that he appears to have found it in the very source that seemed the most threatening:

the brain itself. The brain, as we shall see, was a threatening to the hope of autonomous human efficiency, because of the possibility that it was simply a purposeless machine that simply *reacted* to its environment. Yet, James was able (with the help of certain European physiologists) to articulate a view of the nervous system that kept alive the hope that real, purposive choice was a possibility. Yet, he would not be entirely content with the answer, as we shall see in chapter 12.

The major problem with American faculty psychology was its unwillingness to consider physiological causes. Although we noted that Upham did spend some time considering physiology, we did conclude that his incorporation was quite shallow. Upham, in a manner understandable for someone who began writing psychology textbooks in the 1820s, saw the momentous implications of physiology only through a glass darkly. Even the 1869 edition of Mental Philosophy which we analyzed made mention of physiology only in passing, and seemed to think it relevant only in cases of pathology. Upham was not alone in his neglect of European physiological science, either. James McCosh, the “American” mental philosopher who made the best effort of to take physiology into consideration, still approached the topic as something largely irrelevant to mental life. James therefore seems justified in his contention that the “faculty psychology” had neglected physiology. Further, if the “New Psychology” of James et al. has any claim to really being new, it may very well be the way in which physiological reality systematically shaped its psychological theorizing.

James thought the unwillingness of mental philosophy to consider the machinery of the mind left certain important questions unanswered— questions which, James was certain, physiological considerations could handle. For example, “...why should this

absolute god-given Faculty retain so much better the events of yesterday than those of last year, and, best of all, those of an hour ago?...Why should illness and exhaustion enfeeble [memory]?...Why should drugs, fevers, asphyxia, and excitement resuscitate things long since forgotten?" (I.2-3). James understandably thought that merely saying that "the faculty of memory is so peculiarly constituted by nature as to exhibit just these oddities," was of minimal usefulness, shedding little or no light on the subject. He concluded that "...*the faculty does not exist absolutely, but works under conditions*; and *the quest of the conditions* becomes the psychologist's most interesting task." The "conditions" that James would most closely rely upon would be physiological.

Despite his progressiveness, James was also liable to make deep presumptions which are easier to see in hindsight. The quote above, "*the faculty does not exist absolutely, but works under conditions*" contains a seed of irony, when we keep the loss of will in mind. What *are* the conditions of the faculty *of will*? James thought that focusing upon the physiological conditions would be a sufficient explanation for all the psychological faculties. Nevertheless, it is a thesis of this paper that the "conditions" of will were primarily moral and even theological, and that the removal of these conditions actually endangered the very existence of the faculty. As we shall see from time to time, James thought that the existence of the will could be taken for granted. This was a presumption. Just as psychologists no longer speak of Plato's "thumos," so too we rarely hear talk of "will." This is, I think, due in part to the fact that our understanding of the structure and function of the mind depends a great deal upon the stories and worldviews that we carry in to our psychologizing. The concept of a faculty of will emerged in a particular historical context, just as it was lost in another context.

Just as the faculty psychology approach was lacking, James also thought the associationist explanation of memory was not satisfactory. The associationist claims that “an idea” precedes and activates our memories. Whatever merit this theory has, James thought that associationist thinking still failed to explain “...the effects of fever, exhaustion, hypnotism, old age, and the like.” Like the faculties of the “pure spiritualist,” ideas exist as absolute entities in the associationist system, and are as entities therefore “almost as bewildering.” James did not deny that ideas are often found “clinging together.” He simply wanted to ask, “...whence do they get their fantastic laws of clinging, and why do they cling in just the shapes they do?” Again, the associationist school is likewise faulty for failing to take physiology into account. The following quote summarizes James’s overall rationale for the preeminence of physiology in psychological explanation:

For this the associationist must introduce the order of experience in the outer world. The dance of the ideas is a copy, somewhat mutilated and altered, of the order of phenomena. But the slightest reflection shows that phenomena have absolutely no power to influence our ideas until they have first impressed our senses and our brain. The bare existence of a past fact is no ground for our remembering it. Unless we have seen it, or somehow *undergone* it, we shall never know of its having been. The experiences of the body are thus one of the conditions of the faculty of memory being what it is. And a very small amount of reflection on facts shows that one part of the body, namely, the brain, is the part whose experiences are directly concerned. (I.3)

James thought the importance of the brain to the mental life so obvious, and “so

universally admitted nowadays” that he did not need to spend considerable time illustrating it. He considered it a fundamental “postulate” of psychology. “The whole remainder of the book will be more or less of a proof that the postulate was correct” (I.3-4). Always ecumenically-minded, James did not call for psychologists to abandon their preferred approaches. Yet, he thought, all psychologists would have to grapple with physiology. “*The spiritualist and the associationist must both be ‘cerebralists,’* to the extent at least of admitting that certain peculiarities in the way of working of their own favorite principles are explicable only by the fact that the brain laws are a codeterminant of the result” (I.4). So, James concluded, “our first conclusion, then, is that a certain amount of brain-physiology must be presupposed or included in Psychology” (I.5).

Significantly, James did not say that brain physiology *is* psychology or that it replaces psychology. Rather physiology comes alongside psychology as a necessary aid to the psychologist. Indeed, as he reiterates throughout Principles, psychic phenomena, which are the proper subject of psychology, are strictly separated from physiological phenomena.

European psychology had exceeded American in its awareness of the automaticity of action: “Standing, walking, buttoning and unbuttoning, piano-playing, talking, even saying one’s prayers, may be done when the mind is absorbed in other things” (II.5). Even so, these automatic actions *seem* purposive yet are actually mindless. This fact raised the difficult constitutive question of psychology: which phenomena are to be understood as psychological? Automatic behaviors still “resemble intelligent acts” because they manifest “the *same ends*” as consciously produced activity (I.5-6). James did not affirm that automaticity is necessarily a psychological phenomenon. But his

approach was open-minded, saying that physiology will help the psychologist understand mental phenomena:

The boundary-line of the mental is certainly vague. It is better not to be pedantic, but to let the science be as vague as its subject, and include such phenomena as these if by so doing we can throw any light on the main business in hand. It will ere long be seen, I trust, that we can; and that we gain much more by a broad than by a narrow conception of our subject. (I.6)

From the perspective of this dissertation, the vagueness of the boundary between machine-like automaticity and mental operation is highly significant. At stake were the limits of human efficiency. If our actions are mindless, *we* are not really the cause of them. Yet, rather than take refuge in the armchair speculations of “Rational Psychology” which treated mind as if it had no connection to the physical world, James took the brave step of considering the difficult facts. Was human activity mechanical? “I shall therefore feel free to make any sallies into zoology or into pure nerve-physiology which may seem instructive for our purposes, but otherwise shall leave those sciences to the physiologists” (I.6).

Before completing these initial comments, James diffused some of the anxiety that might attend such a study by offering a sneak preview of what was to come. James reported on European physiologists who designed experiments to detect purposive as opposed to mechanical behavior. The difference is illustrated by the difference between bubbles rising to the surface of the water and a frog doing the same thing. The bubbles do not act with a purpose. If unhindered, they will rise to the surface, but if hindered below a cup, they will remain caught indefinitely. A frog, however, when hindered from

reaching the surface will search frantically for another way. The frog's behavior is purposive, mindful, and efficient activity.

In the same way, physiological experiments were being performed which could detect purposive activity even in headless frogs. Strange as it may seem, James seemed to take comfort in this fact. There was a clear distinction between purposive physiology and merely automatic, reflexive, mechanical physiology. This will become clearer below. But, given these insights, James adopted the viewpoint of these physiologists: *"...no actions but such as are done for an end, and show a choice of means, can be called indubitable expressions of Mind."* But science was showing that Mind, and its correlative "choice of means" was somehow written into the nervous system. Minds are not dumb, predictable machines, but seek ends through choice. The physical world, which served as a substructure to Mind, therefore could serve the ends of volition and efficiency.

James related the apparent reality of Mind and purpose to the very broadest philosophical (and theological) issues. In most un-Darwinistic fashion, James stated:

Just so we form our decision upon the deepest of all philosophic problems: Is the Kosmos an expression of intelligence rational in its inward nature, or a brute external fact pure and simple? If we find ourselves, in contemplating it, unable to banish the impression that it is a realm of final purposes, that it exists for the sake of something, we place intelligence at the heart of it and have a religion. If, on the contrary, in surveying its irremediable flux, we can think of the present only as so much mere mechanical sprouting from the past, occurring with no reference to the future, we are atheists and materialists. (I.8)

Although Darwin did not need final purposes in order to explain purposive behavior, James apparently did, and so was a much better fit in the American context which had grown used to a theological functionalism under mental philosophers such as Thomas Upham. James apparently counted himself among those with “religion.” In this quote, James apparently opposes purpose with purposelessness, not libertarian freedom and determinism. As Edwards had argued, purpose and motivation were themselves deterministic concepts: the frog’s desire to find the surface of the water was certainly *determined* by its purposive desires. At this stage, therefore, James does not fully reveal his Arminian stripes. It will become apparent, however, that the power to pursue our own ends, the power to do as we desire, was not a sufficient efficiency for James. James, like Upham before him, would desire to find an underived efficiency: a power to do some good all his own.

The Functions of the Brain

In true American fashion, James began his discussion of “the functions of the brain” (chapter II) on a functional note, arguing that the mere presence of a nervous system gives great advantage to those creatures so bestowed: “If I begin chopping the foot of a tree, its branches are unmoved by my act, and its leaves murmur as peacefully as ever in the wind. If, on the contrary, I do violence to the foot of a fellow-man, the rest of his body instantly responds to the aggression by movements of alarm or defense” (I.12). The adaptive defensive movements of his fellow-man are due, James argued, to the fact that “...the man has a nervous system whilst the tree has none.” A nervous system has a particularly adaptive “function” which is “..to bring each part into harmonious co-operation with every other” (I.12).

The first thing James reveals of this nervous system, and a recurrent point of reference throughout the Principles, is the distinction between “afferent nerves” (or those ‘sensory’ nerves traveling toward the spinal cord and brain), and the “efferent nerves” (or those ‘motor’ nerves moving away from the spinal cord and brain). Instead of simply explaining this distinction, he immediately shows how this simple arrangement *may* result in purely mechanistic, albeit functional, activity. “The afferent nerves, when excited by some physical irritant, be this as gross in its mode of operation as a chopping axe or as subtle as the waves of light, conveys the excitement to the nervous centers. The commotion set up in the centres does not stop there, but discharges itself, if at all strong, through the efferent nerves into muscles and glands, exciting movements of the limbs and viscera, or acts of secretion, which vary with the animal, and with the irritant applied” (I.12).

James, fighting off the monstrosity of mechanism, was very concerned with differentiating the more mechanical responses of the nervous system with the more “spontaneous” activities. (Spontaneity, recall, was one of the concepts used by Arminian psychologists to describe the soul. Edwards argued that a general characteristic like spontaneity cannot predict *particular* acts). This concern led James to introduce the concept of volition at this very early of the Principles. James, positing a kind of continuum from involuntary to voluntary activities, distinguished three kinds of response to sensational stimuli. Things such as “the closure of the eye and the lachrymation... and...the disturbance of the heart,” are considered “involuntary” or “‘reflex’ acts.” Other actions, such as moving the arm to “...break the shock of falling” are, like reflex acts, non-deliberate, yet are “less automatic” than reflex activity. One’s execution of these

movements can improve through education or be suppressed. These actions “...have been called ‘semi-reflex.’” Actions such as “...running towards the train...” are devoid of instinct and proceed “purely” from “education.” These actions are ““voluntary.” If these three kinds of actions are understood as lying along a continuum, one can see how “...the animal’s reflex and voluntary performances *shade into each other gradually*, being connected by acts which may often occur automatically, but may also be modified by conscious intelligence” (I.13, italics mine). This comment also shows that James believed there to be linkage between consciousness and volition. Consciousness allowed the agent to move beyond automaticity. It allowed the self to exert some efficiency.

As will become clearer when discussing the “automaton theory,” James was interested in European debates concerning the relation between consciousness and will. What is the link, if any, between “appropriateness” (adaptive, functional action), feeling, and volition? The answer was complicated by the fact that an “outside observer” has difficulty discriminating between automatic, mechanical action and voluntary action. Both actions have the appearance of purpose; both are appropriate given their context. Since the outward observer has no access to the mind of the actor, it is impossible to ascertain the role that consciousness may or may not play in the process. Therefore, “choice of the proper means” cannot be considered a sufficient criterion of the mind’s existence because reflex actions are highly functional and give the appearance of voluntary choice or efficiency.

These considerations led to “...two quite opposite theories about the relation to consciousness of the nervous functions,” both of which James found problematic because they challenged the very notion of will. Both theories insisted that the apparent lack of

difference between reflex and voluntary action *outwardly* translated into a lack of difference *inwardly*. One position, stressing the importance of consciousness, maintained that since “higher” voluntary processes “...seem to require the guidance of feeling,” then the reflexes must also have some degree of feeling, “...though it may be a feeling of which *we* remain unconscious.” The other extreme, mechanistic position denied the necessity of consciousness altogether. Since reflex action seems to proceed without consciousness, then the adaptiveness or “appropriateness” of voluntary actions “...owes nothing to the fact that consciousness attends them,” but are rather the passive “...results of mechanism pure and simple” (pp. 13-14). James, on the other hand, thought that consciousness was the *sine qua non* of voluntary action, and that the experimental and introspective evidence for consciousness related to the lower parts of the nervous system was inconclusive. More on this topic is discussed below. In sum, however, European theories had cast human efficiency into doubt.

Armed with the irrefutable evidence of his own consciousness, James explored the link between brain and mind. Although the study of the brain was still very young and subject to rapid change, James argued that there was a consensual “way of conceiving the organ” that not only promised to “stand” but also offered insight into the link between mind and brain. This scheme was known as the “Meynert Scheme,” a viewpoint that James found helpful but overly simple.

To begin the discussion, James told his readers that “the best way to enter the subject will be to take a lower creature, like a frog, and study by the vivisectional method the functions of his different nerve-centres.” James describes the behavior of the frog after being lesioned in various places along the central nervous system, a procedure

which helped to lay down basic differences “...between the cerebral hemispheres and the lower lobes.” Warned that the generalizations generated from this initial procedure are “too simple a formula,” James hoped to lay down general principles that could help solve the mysterious link between nervous physiology and consciousness.

If the frog’s nervous system is reduced to the spinal cord, “...the frog will still continue to live, but with a very peculiarly modified activity.” That is, it stops breathing, does not sit up, remains on its back when turned over. Yet, the frog is still able to engage in some reflexive, “appropriate” action, such as wiping away an irritant applied to its skin. When only the cerebral hemispheres of a frog are removed, the scope of appropriate, teleological action broadens, so much so that “an unpractised observer” would not immediately notice anything wrong. But closer inspection reveals that the frog’s activities have been made *mechanical*. They are *completely predictable*, containing no “incalculable element.” There is an “...almost entire absence of spontaneous motion—that is, motion unprovoked by any *present* incitation of sense.” For example, the decorticate frog would swim when placed into water, but this activity seemed “...to be the *fatal result* [italics mine] of the contact of that fluid with its skin....In a word, [the frog had become] an extremely complex machine whose actions, so far as they go, tend to self-preservation ; but still a *machine*...” The activity of the decorticate frog is completely predictable: “...by applying the right sensory stimulus to him we are almost as certain of getting a *fixed response* [italics mine] as an organist is of hearing a certain tone when he pulls out a certain stop” (I.17).

The situation changes, however, when the cerebral hemispheres of the frog are held in tact. “In addition to the previous responses to present incitements of sense, our

frog now goes through long and complex acts of locomotion *spontaneously*, or as if moved by what in ourselves we should call an idea” (I.17-18). Ideas, a crucial and precious concept to James, were the source of all human efficiency. The result of possessing hemispheres, then, is something analogous to *thought*, and the result of thought is *unpredictable and spontaneous, as opposed to mechanical, behavior*. Thought allowed the creature to exert itself against the tides of fatal determination. “His conduct has become *incalculable*. We can *no longer foretell it exactly*. Effort to escape is his dominant reaction, but he *may* do anything else, even swell up and become perfectly passive in our hands.” Given James’s concern with the problems of determinism, monism, and “fatality,” James’s scientific prose here takes on spiritual significance, which will be seen more clearly as this explication of James’s psychology of will continues. In passing, however, note that the apparently simple difference between the decorticate and full-brained frog contained potential answers to cosmic questions. If the normal frog was capable of non-fatal spontaneity, how much more capable are human beings, endowed with the most developed “hemispheres” in all of nature! Experimental results such as these, which James continued to flesh out in the Principles in greater detail (see below), would form the biological basis for James’s hope for free will.

Maintaining his scientific standpoint, James argued that “certain general conclusions follow irresistibly” to the experimental results described above. First, he noted that “*the acts of all the centres involve the use of the same muscles*.” That is, the decorticate frog may engage in precisely the same behavior— at least outwardly. The crucial difference is that although the cerebral hemispheres bring “*...no new elementary form of movement...*” they do make “*...the usual stimuli less fatal and machine-like...*”

Stating a principle that was central to his psychology of volition, James noted that possession of the “hemispheres” kept muscular activity from slavishly following certain stimuli. When the organism is in possession of the full cortex, muscular movements occur, for example, only “...when the *mandate* for a wiping-movement is sent forth by the hemispheres, that a current goes straight to the wiping-arrangement in the spinal cord, exciting this arrangement as a whole” (I.18-19; Italics mine). James would later explain that his activity-determining “mandate,” which is a perception analogous to the aforementioned “idea,” is, in humans, to some degree controllable and indeterminate. By fixating upon certain morally desirable ideas, a human being can gain a measure of control over his or her behavior.

James then gives a “general notion of the hemispheres.” The mechanistic reactions are the result of the lower centers of the brain, while the less predictable volitional reactions are in the hemispheres, which have “ideas” or perceptions as their conscious correlates. He summarizes thus: “All these facts lead us, when we think about them, to some such explanatory conception as this: *The lower centres act from present sensational stimuli alone; the hemispheres act from perceptions and considerations...*”

These “perceptions and considerations” which serve as the spring of the actions of the hemispheres are built up gradually through experience. “Past experience provides the essential raw material for perceptions and considerations.” With the hemispheres intact, which are the “seat of memory,” the organism is enabled to “obey” absent objects as well as present objects. Again, without the hemispheres, behavior is automatic. With the hemispheres intact, however, the animal may resist the pull of a given stimulus for other, broader concerns. The hemispheres thereby serve the eminently practical function of

facilitating survival. On a moral level, James made evident later in the book, the hemispheres are the place in which the pull of lower desires may be resisted by higher ones. In either case, the hemispheres are the physiological location of human efficiency.

To illustrate the adaptiveness and freedom of hemispheric input, he uses the example of feeding. "Take the prehension of food as an example and suppose it to be a reflex performance of the lower centres." If one supposes that the "prehension of food" takes place strictly in the "lower centres," and, by consequence, does not involve the hemispheres, "the animal will be condemned *fatally and irresistibly* to snap at it whenever presented, no matter what the circumstances may be; he can no more disobey this prompting than water can refuse to boil when a fire is kindled under the pot. His life will again and again pay the forfeit of his gluttony" (*italics mine*). The "lowest" animals are characterized by this lack of reflection. He gives the example of a fish, which eats the worm on the hook reflexively, even after it has been caught before.

His lack of all thought by which to weigh the danger against the attractiveness of the bait, and of all volition to remain hungry a little while longer, is the direct measure of his lowness in the mental scale. And those fishes which, like our cunners and sculpins, are no sooner thrown back from the hook into the water, than they automatically seize the hook again, would soon expiate the degradation of their intelligence by the extinction of their type, did not their exaggerated fecundity atone for their imprudence. (I.22)

By contrast, the feeding activities of "higher vertebrates," have "...consequently become...functions of the cerebrum." The degree to which behavior is located in the hemisphere is the degree to which an animal has the potential for choice. For example,

“the sexual function” of birds “...devolves exclusively upon the hemispheres. When [the hemispheres] are shorn away the pigeon pays no attention to the billings and cooings of its mate.” By way of contrast, “...in frogs and toads this [sexual] passion devolves on the lower centres. They show consequently a *machine-like obedience* to the present incitement of sense, and an almost total exclusion of *the power of choice*” (I.22, italics mine).

Like the birds, human beings can thank their hemispheres for the “prevalence of chastity” in the human race. “Hardly any factor measures more than this the difference between civilization and barbarism. Physiologically interpreted, chastity means nothing more than the fact that present solicitations of sense are overpowered by suggestions of aesthetic and moral fitness which the circumstances awaken in the cerebrum ; and that upon the inhibitory or permissive influence of these alone action directly depends” (I.22-23). James’s moral concerns seep through here, as they often do. An implicit but ill-defined morality is infused into the cerebrum.

James links cerebrum with the ability to live life for “remote” as opposed to “immediate” considerations. Implying a link between moral choice and size of cortex, James not only makes clear moral distinctions between lifestyles, but also implies that these lifestyles may be linked to variations in size of cortex, and, therefore, choice:

In all ages the man whose determinations are swayed by reference to the most distant ends has been held to possess the highest intelligence. The tramp who lives from hour to hour; the bohemian whose engagements are from day to day; the bachelor who builds but for a single life; the father who acts for another generation; the patriot who thinks of a whole community and many generations;

and finally, the philosopher and saint whose cares are for humanity and for eternity,—these range themselves in an unbroken hierarchy, wherein each successive grade results from an increased manifestation of the special form of action by which the cerebral centres are distinguished from all below them. (I.23)

In sum, James had looked squarely at brain physiology which at first glance seemed to rob humanity of all efficiency, but found that physiology actually undergirded efficiency.

The Education of the Hemispheres

James summarizes the simplified scheme in this way: “Nerve-currents run in through sense-organs, and whilst provoking reflex acts in the lower centres, they arouse ideas in the hemispheres, which either permit the reflexes in question, check them, or substitute others for them.” The power of volition here is to be found in this power of permission, checking or substituting. Since the ideas aroused through sensory inputs are kinds of memories, James addressed the question of “*How can processes become organized in the hemispheres which correspond to reminiscences in the mind ?*” With this question, linking material, physiological activities to conscious experiences, James addresses the mind/body problem directly. He argued that the answer to this question is easy, if four assumptions are granted:

- 1) The same cerebral process which, when aroused from without by a sense-organ, gives the perception of an object, will give an *idea* of the same object when aroused by other cerebral processes from within.
- 2) If processes 1, 2, 3, 4 have once been aroused together or in immediate succession, any subsequent arousal of any one of them (whether from without or within) will tend to arouse the others in the original order.[This is the so-called

law of association.]

3) Every sensorial excitement propagated to a lower centre tends to spread upwards and arouse an idea.

4) Every idea tends ultimately either to produce a movement or to check one which otherwise would be produced. (I.24)

It is worth noting that point four seems to leave open the possibility that ideas may “suspend” volitions, an idea that Arminian psychologists took great comfort in. As Edwards noted, the ability to suspend was thought by some to be the essence of human freedom. For James, the fact that an idea can “check” a movement was comforting in much the same way: it gave the human being the power or efficiency to resist the otherwise “fatal” tides of determinism.

With these assumptions in place, James described how a baby learns to refrain from touching a flame. At first, the child is instinctually drawn to the flame, reaches out and gets burned. The baby reflexively pulls back. Two reflex acts are in play. Without the hemispheres, which make *memory* and *association* a possibility, the child would simply continue to engage in the same reflexive activity, and continue to get burned. But with the hemispheres, sensations are represented and stored in the cortex, and contiguous sensory experiences are linked together through association. The next time the child sees the flame, the impulse to reach out is inhibited by the stronger inhibitory idea of being burned.

This model, which James calls the “Meynert scheme,” is intuitively obvious. So much so that it “...almost...impose[s] itself on our belief.” After reviewing the available physiological evidence on the localization of function in the hemispheres, James

concluded that the Meynert scheme “is on the whole most satisfactorily corroborated by subsequent objective research,” (I.64), but that it “...makes the lower centres too machine-like and the hemispheres not quite machine-like enough...” (I.27).

“We thus see that the postulate of Meynert and Jackson which we started with on p.30 is on the whole most satisfactorily corroborated by subsequent objective research. *The highest centres do probably contain nothing but arrangements for representing impressions and movements, and other arrangements for coupling the activity of these arrangements together.* Currents pouring in from the sense-organs first excite some arrangements, which in turn excite others, until at last a motor discharge downwards of some sort occurs” (I.64-65).

In his chapter on will, James reveals a concern about whether efferent nervous impulses can be felt. In that chapter, James argues that they cannot. In this chapter, James makes a comment that seems to contradict this later assertion by saying that *all* the currents in the cortex have feelings going with them. A closer look, however, reveals that James is consistent on this point. James argued that “the whole cortex” is both sensory and motor, because the afferent and efferent currents “run through” the cortex. “All the currents probably have feelings going with them, and sooner or later bring movements about.” “All the currents” here are the afferent currents because they are distinguished from those which, occurring later, “bring movements about” (I.65).

When he describes how consciousness accompanies the stream of innervation, he again makes reference to afferent impulses. The stream is “...mainly of things seen if the stream is strongest occipitally, of things heard if it is strongest temporally, of things felt, etc., if the stream occupies most intensely the ‘motor zone’” (I.65).

James turned next to a different but related question. “*But is the consciousness which accompanies the activity of the cortex the only consciousness that man has? or are his lower centres conscious as well?*” Although he admitted that “This is a difficult question to decide...” and that there is evidence that consciousness may be associated with subcortical structures in nonhumans, he concludes that “For practical purposes, nevertheless, and limiting the meaning of the word consciousness to the personal self of the individual, we can pretty confidently answer the question prefixed to this paragraph by saying that *the cortex is the sole organ of consciousness in man*. If there be any consciousness pertaining to the lower centers, it is a consciousness of which the self knows nothing” (I.66-67).

Given these considerations, James proposed a revision to the Meynert Scheme. Originally, it will be remembered, James’s inspection of the data on frogs led to the conclusion that “the lower centres” served as machines responding only to “present sense-impressions,” while the hemispheres served as “organs of action from *inward considerations or ideas*.” His account was initially overly-simplified, however, in that “...following Meynert, we supposed the hemispheres to have no native tendencies to determinate activity, but to be merely superadded organs for breaking up the various reflexes performed by the lower centres, and combining their motor and sensory elements in novel ways.” With this simplistic model and the experimental evidence before him, James set out to make a few corrections to this scheme. In sum, “wider and completer observations show us both that the lower centres are more spontaneous, and that the hemispheres are more automatic, than the Meynert scheme allows” (I.74).

The Meynert scheme is a fair fit for lower animals: “Even in the lower animals,

then, there is reason to soften down that opposition between the hemispheres and the lower centres which the scheme demands. The hemispheres may, it is true, only supplement the lower centres, but the latter resemble the former in nature and have some small amount at least of 'spontaneity' and choice." For higher animals, "monkeys and man" specifically, "...the scheme well-nigh breaks down altogether..." Instead of the hemispheres simply repeating "...voluntarily actions which the lower centres perform as machines," the hemispheres are actually found to be crucial for any engagement in activities that were, in lower animals, limited to the lower centers. "It would seem, then, that in these higher creatures the lower centres must be less adequate than they are farther down in the zoological scale..." (I.75). This physiological fact was good news for human efficiency. Human beings possess control even over our most basic instinctual drives. As will become clear in chapter 12, the opposition between instinctual and ideal drives was in James's mind the basic moral struggle, and here he outlines the physiological basis for this struggle.

Just as the lower centers do not exert an autonomous influence over basic human activities, the hemispheres are correspondingly found to be subjected to more mechanical and instinctual laws. "The plain truth is that neither in man nor beast are the hemispheres the virgin organs which our scheme called them." Instead of being "unorganized at birth," the hemispheres "...have native tendencies to reaction of a determinate sort." These tendencies are the emotions and instincts, and are a hindrance to the freedom of human volition: "Both instincts and emotions are reactions upon special sorts of objects of *perception*; they depend on the hemispheres; and they are in the first instance reflex, that is, they take place the first time the exciting object is met, are accompanied by no

forethought or deliberation, and are *irresistible*” (italics mine). This diversion from the Meynert scheme was certainly a stumbling block in the path toward autonomous human efficiency. But James quickly showed that these “irresistible” and instinctual reactions could be subject to the control of the person.

The pre-organization of the brain is not, however, absolutely determinative. Thankfully (James might say), these instinctual, automatic, hemispheric reactions “...are modifiable to a certain extent by experience, and on later occasions of meeting the exciting object, the instincts especially have less of the *blind impulsive character* which they had at first” (italics mine). We take back some control. James addresses this phenomenon in his chapter on Instinct. Although “the multiplicity of emotional and instinctive reactions in man” form the raw material from which a mind may be built, they do “...permit of extensive recouplings of the original sensory and motor partners,” particularly though the “...extensive associative power...” of the human brain. This “education” of the hemispheres does not require a blank slate, as the Meynert scheme had argued. With these constraints in mind, James concludes that “...*we can no longer hold strictly to the Meynert scheme*. If anywhere, it will apply to the lowest animals; but in them especially the lower centres seem to have a degree of spontaneity and choice” (I.78, underline mine).

In concluding his chapter on the functions of the brain, James pulled together the concepts of consciousness, mechanism, desire and will. He once again contrasts consciousness with mechanism, and argues that “the centres” in animals may have some degree of consciousness. Nevertheless, there is a hierarchy in terms of the degree to which animals possess consciousness. Humans, it is implied, have the most.

Consciousness is crucial to the “development of will.” To explain this linkage, the concept of desire is utilized, which James had not, up to this point, substantially utilized in chapter II. Nevertheless, the concept of desire is linked to “ends,” which had been part of the discussion, so James is not being inconsistent here. In a very Calvinistic-sounding quote, James describes the linkage between consciousness, desire and will is expressed thus:

The consciousness must everywhere *prefer* some of the sensations which it gets to others; and if it can remember these in their absence, however dimly, they must be its *ends* of desire. If, moreover, it can identify in memory any motor discharges which may have led to such *ends*, and associate the latter with them, then these motor discharges themselves may in turn become desired as *means*. This is the development of *will*... (I.78)

Just as Edwards and Ames tended to view will as a broad concept having to do with the desiring and inclining aspect of the self, so too James defines will broadly—at least here, that is. Consciousness has preferences and tendencies to move in particular directions. It is these preferences and ends which are the will. The degree of the development of will is related to the sophistication of the consciousness of the given animal. On a very low level, “even the spinal cord may possibly have some little power of will in this sense, and of effort towards modified behavior in consequence of new experiences of sensibility.” In a footnote, he speaks of how the spinal cord “...may, in its dim way, both feel, prefer, and desire” (I.78).

James ties the issue to evolutionary history in such a way that he appears to impute a degree of purpose to the “development” of consciousness and, by implication,

the human race, which by virtue of having the most consciousness, are the highest of all earthy beings. James thereby provided a kind of secular, biological creation story which was consistent with the continuing late nineteenth-century belief of the superiority of human beings. In his account, he continues to contrast consciousness and mechanism, and he continues to link consciousness to the hemispheres.

The nervous centers have “one essential function...‘intelligent’ action.” These centers “...feel, prefer one thing to another, and have ‘ends.’” The process of evolution is that of a growing automaticity in the lower centers, and of growing freedom and “intellectuality” in the higher centers:

Like all other organs, however, [the centres] *evolve* from ancestor to descendant, and their evolution takes two directions, the lower centres passing downwards into more unhesitating automatism, and the higher ones upwards into larger intellectuality. Thus it may happen that those functions which can safely grow uniform and fatal become least accompanied by mind, and that their organ, the spinal cord, becomes a more and more soulless machine; whilst on the contrary those functions which it benefits the animal to have adapted to delicate environing variations pass more and more to the hemispheres, whose anatomical structure and attendant consciousness grow more and more elaborate as zoological evolution proceeds. In this way it might come about that in man and the monkeys the basal ganglia should do fewer things by themselves than they can do in dogs, fewer in dogs than in rabbits, fewer in rabbits than in hawks, fewer in hawks than in pigeons, fewer in pigeons than in frogs, fewer in frogs than in fishes, and that the hemispheres should correspondingly do more. This passage of functions

forward to the ever-enlarging hemispheres would be itself one of the evolutive changes, to be explained like the development of the hemispheres themselves, either by fortunate variation or by inherited effects of use. (I.79)

Some General Conditions of Brain-Activity

In the third chapter of Principles, James quickly disposed of the notion that “ideas” or parts of ideas are somehow contained in cells and then associated by nerve fibers. He would take associationist psychology to task several times in the Principles; this particular refutation was biology-centered:

Too much anatomy has been found to order for theoretic purposes, even by the anatomists; and the popular-science notions of cells and fibres are almost wholly wide of the truth. Let us therefore relegate the subject of the *intimate* workings of the brain to the physiology of the future, save in respect to a few points of which a word must now be said. (I.81-82)

More relevant to the topic of volition, if only tangentially so, is James’s discussion of the “summation of stimuli.” James asserted that this was an “extremely important” aspect of the nervous system, and shed light on “...a great many phenomena of the neural, and consequently of the mental, life.” The law of summation of stimuli is “...*a stimulus which would be inadequate by itself to excite a nerve-centre to effective discharge may, by acting with one or more other stimuli (equally ineffectual by themselves alone) bring the discharge about.*” Although the subject “belong[ed] too much to physiology” to give a detailed summary of the evidence for this phenomena, James included a simple but convincing account of how stimulation of the cortex by a single, weak electrical current is insufficient to trigger a motor response, but how a

succession of weak stimuli is sufficient to produce the motor response. To make this seemingly irrelevant phenomena interesting to his readers, James offered some down-to-earth examples to illustrate the phenomena. We use the principle of summation of stimuli “constantly.” For example, a “strange person” or “darkness” may, by themselves be insufficient to trigger “fear and mistrust,” (I.84) but when the two are encountered at the same time, fear and mistrust ensue. “Street-hawkers” also demonstrate an implicit understanding of this phenomenon, “...for they arrange themselves in a line upon the sidewalk, and the passer often buys from the last one of them, through the effect of the reiterated solicitation, what he refused to buy from the first in the row.” Relevant to the topic of volition, James promised to utilize this concept in his chapters on “...Instinct, the Stream of Thought, Attention, Discrimination, Association, Memory, Aesthetics, and Will...” (I.85).

Reaction Time

Just as James had examined brain physiology and determined that there was no insurmountable threat to human efficiency, so too James turned to contemporary attempts to study volition experimentally with the intention of safeguarding the dignity of volitional processes. The inclusion of the topic of reaction time under the heading of “general conditions of brain activity,” is telling and ironic. James believed that reaction-time experiments (which will be explained below) were helpful strictly a measures of physiological activity. The irony of this understanding, is that some of the proponents of the reaction-time experiments (most notably Wilhelm Wundt) believed they were shedding light on the topic of volition. The irony is multiplied when one considers the canonical origin story about scientific psychology, i.e., that experimental psychology was

started in Leipzig. In this chapter at least, James calls into question whether Wundt's procedure is a measure of mind at all. James's challenge of Wundt's draws on the crucial distinction between reflex and conscious activity, and sheds light on James's own psychology of volition.

James situated the reaction-time experiments historically as a continuation of Helmholtz's measurements of "the rapidity of the current in the sciatic nerve of the frog." This approach led to "one of the lines of experimental investigation most diligently followed of late years," that is, "...the ascertainment of the *time occupied by nervous events*." These methods were subsequently "...applied to the sensory nerves and the centres, and the results caused much popular scientific admiration when described as measurements of the 'velocity of thought'" (I.85). He found "...the phrase 'velocity of *thought*'" to be "misleading," because it was "...by no means clear in any of the cases what particular act of thought occurs during the time which is measured." James thought that the experiments really measured "...the total duration of certain *reactions upon stimuli*" (I.86). James therefore thought that reaction-times were better measurements of reflexive activities than cognitive ones.

James gave a succinct summary of the reaction-time experimental procedure:

The method is essentially the same in all these investigations. A signal of some sort is communicated to the subject, and at the same instant records itself on a time-registering apparatus. The subject then makes a muscular movement of some sort, which is the 'reaction,' and which also records itself automatically. The time found to have elapsed between the two records is the total time of that observation. The time-registering instruments are of various types. (I.86)

After describing several types of time measuring machines, James related his own “personal experience” of the reaction-time methodology. He felt that this method reduced the human subject to a kind of mechanistic state, precluding the possibility of actually measuring higher volitional processes:

The subject of experiment, whenever the reactions are short and regular, is in a state of extreme tension, and feels, when the signal comes, as if *it* started the reaction, by a sort of fatality, and as if no psychic process of perception or volition had a chance to intervene. The whole succession is so rapid that perception seems to be retrospective, and the time-order of events to be read off in memory rather than known at the moment.

Although James admitted that this was his “...own personal experience in the matter,” he also added that he “...[found] others to agree” with this assessment (I.88).

James went to lengths to show that it is very difficult to tell precisely what sort of conscious experience accompanied the reaction-time experiments. Despite the ambiguities, James reported, with a degree of bewilderment, that “Wundt has little difficulty in deciding that it is consciousness of a quite elaborate kind...” that was being measured in his experiments. To elucidate the difference of opinion, James offered an explanation of the Wundtian terminology. Wundt’s distinction between *perception* and *apperception* was quite important, “...likening the one [perception] to the mere entrance of an object into the periphery of the field of vision, and the other [apperception] to its coming to occupy the focus or point of view.” James, who had earlier in the Principles confessed confusion over Wundt’s use of terms, offered his own interpretation of the Wundtian terminology: “*Inattentive awareness* of an object, and *attention* to it, are, it

seems to me, equivalents for perception and apperception, as Wundt uses the words.”

Although perception and apperception were to James unobjectionable, although perhaps conceptually unclear, Wundt’s belief that “the conscious volition to react” also attended the experimental process was quite troublesome. Wundt argued that perception, apperception, and the conscious volition to react occur sequentially, and, taken together, constituted “‘psycho-physical’ processes.” (I.90). James thought that “...no such succession of conscious feelings as Wundt describes takes place,” and, therefore, Wundt’s procedure was unable to access volitional and other higher aspects consciousness. “Feeling of the impression, attention to it, thought of the reaction, volition to react, *would*, undoubtedly, all be links of the process *under other conditions...*” Given the spontaneity and unpredictableness of higher processes, these other conditions would lead to “the same reaction” but only “after an indefinitely longer time.” Drawing upon a principle that was near and dear to the Puritan psychology of William Ames, and reiterating a point from chapter II, James asserted that “...it is mythological psychology...to conclude that because two mental processes lead to the same result they must be similar in their inward subjective constitution.” The inward subjective experience of the experimental subjects was “...no articulate perception...” but was rather “...the mere sense of a reflex discharge. *The reaction whose time is measured is, in short, a reflex action pure and simple, and not a psychic act.*” This did not mean that consciousness was not involved in the Wundtian experiments at all. To the contrary, “a foregoing psychic condition is, it is true, a prerequisite for this reflex action.” The subject had to prepare his attention and volition, to anticipate the signal, to make his hand ready to move at the moment of the signal. Under these conditions, however, the subject

was transformed into a sub-human and mechanistic “arc of reflex discharge” (1.91).

Although James reported that Wundt had “converted to the view which I defend” after he wrote his criticism of the Wundtian methodology, this conversion was incomplete. Wundt now admitted that in “...the shortest reactions ‘there is neither apperception nor will, but that they are merely *brain-reflexes due to practice.*’” The occasion of Wundt’s conversion was the experimental work of “Herr. L. Lange, who was led to distinguish between two ways of setting the attention in reacting on a signal, and who found that they gave very different time-results.” The “‘*extreme sensorial*’ way...” of setting the attention involved keeping “...one’s mind as intent as possible upon the expected *signal*,” (italics mine). The “‘*extreme muscular*’ way...” of setting the attention involved focusing upon the anticipated movement. Reaction-times for the muscular way were “much shorter” than the sensorial ones. Although this distinction was helpful, James thought that Wundt’s interpretation did not go far enough. While Wundt agreed with Lange that the shorter muscular reactions were “mere reflexes,” he insisted that the sensorial way was the proper method of measuring volition. James pointed out, however, that the sensorial method typically led to highly variable and frequently prolonged responses, unless introspectors were *trained* to respond in the proper way. This training brought reaction times closer to the “extreme muscular” method. James concluded that the trained introspectors were “probably” engaged in “...another sort of reflex, less perfect than the reflexes prepared by straining one’s attention towards the movement.” If volitional processes were to be found in these experiments, James speculated, it would have been in the spontaneous, unpredictable, “...excessive and ‘untypical’ times...”

James concluded that “It is obvious that Herr Lange’s distinction between the two

types of reaction is a highly important one..." (I.93) and is useful in "comparative investigations," but that "these reaction-time experiments are... in no sense measurements of the swiftness of *thought*. Only when we complicate them is there a chance for anything like an intellectual operation to occur" (I.94). The reason for including reaction-time experiments in a chapter on the "general conditions of brain activity" is thus made clear. "...The simple reaction-time remains...the fundamental *physiological* constant in all time-measurements." James therefore concludes with a brief overview of "its own variations..." He notes, for example that reaction-times vary with individuals and age, with practice, with concentration (I.95), with intoxicants (I.97), etc. James finished his review with a kind of dismissive summary: "An immense amount of work has been done on reaction-time, of which I have cited but a small part. It is a sort of work which appeals particularly to patient and exact minds, and they have not failed to profit by the opportunity." Clearly, however, the profit gained by these experimentalists had not, in James mind, included a knowledge of the will.

In this chapter, James also included a consideration of "cerebral blood-supply" and "cerebral thermometry," neither of which had a great deal to do with volition. James did make a passing reference to his chapter on Will in discussing a leading hypothesis concerning the relation between intellectual activity and brain temperature. Researchers had found that "...any intellectual effort, such as computing, composing, reciting poetry silently or aloud, and especially that emotional excitement such as an anger fit, caused a general rise of temperature, which rarely exceeded a degree Fahrenheit" (I.100). The rise in temperature was greatest when the poetry was recited silently, rather than aloud. A leading explanation of this phenomenon was that "in internal recitation an additional

portion of energy, which in recitation aloud, was converted into nervous and muscular force, now appears as heat.”” James foreshadowed his discussion in his chapter on Will: “I should suggest rather, if we must have a theory, that the surplus of heat in recitation to one’s self is due to inhibitory processes which are absent when we recite aloud. In the chapter on the Will we shall see that the *simple* central process is to *speak* when we think; to think silently involves a check in addition” (I.100).

James finished this chapter pointing to another chapter that had a great deal to do with the topic of volition:

There remains another feature of general brain-physiology, and indeed for psychological purposes the most important feature of all. I refer to the aptitude of the brain for acquiring *habits*. But I will treat of that in a chapter by itself. (I.103)

Habit as a Loss of Arminian Efficiency

James’s chapter on habit makes it very clear that James’s concept of will, as far as it was an existentially and religiously meaningful concept to him, was “Arminian” in nature. This becomes particularly evident when he equates will with mental effort against alternatives, and when he opposes will with character. The Calvinistic view of will seen in Ames and Edwards included the ideas of habit and character, and would have seen the equation of will with deliberate effort as being much too constricting. Further, James’s Arminian tendencies (again, using the term very broadly), combined with a general lack of hope for theological intervention, lead to an expansion of the “self-righteous” moralism found in Upham, and a surprisingly unmerciful tone. The physical world was unforgiving and so James preached this truth as forcefully as he could. Their very “salvation” was at stake.

In his chapter on habit, the first thing James desired to establish was the fact that “...habit covers a very large part of life...” (I.104). Since Arminian volitions are defined as being separate from habitual actions, this expanding domain of habit in James may be considered part of the loss of will. “When we look at living creatures from an outward point of view, one of the first things that strike us is that they are bundles of habits” (I.104). Recall that Upham also had voiced concern about habit intruding on the domain of the will.

James conceived of habit broadly, as including things such as instincts, “The habits to which there is an innate tendency are called instincts...”, and also “acts of reason,” which are the result of “education” (I.104). Habit involves “...the fundamental properties of matter” (I.104). Indeed, the laws of nature can be understood as habits: “The laws of Nature are nothing but the immutable habits which the different elementary sorts of matter follow in their actions and reactions upon each other” (I.104). By contrast, the habits found in the world of *living* creatures are not so inflexible and fatal. Instincts vary from individual to individual, and within individuals instincts may be modified. This flexibility in living creatures, James argued, is consistent with a mechanistic theory of matter:

The habits of an elementary particle of matter cannot change (on the principles of the atomistic philosophy), because the particle is itself an unchangeable thing; but those of a compound mass of matter can change, because they are in the last instance due to the structure of the compound, and either outward forces or inward tensions can, from one hour to another, turn that structure into something different from what it was. That is, they can do so if the body be plastic enough to

maintain its integrity, and be not disrupted when its structure yields. (I.104-105)

Given James's distaste for fatal necessity, the prospect of turning a "...structure into something different from what it was," was a source of hope for James. He therefore laid great emphasis on the concept of plasticity, defined as "...the possession of a structure weak enough to yield to an influence, but strong enough not to yield all at once." James found "...a very extraordinary degree of plasticity..." (I.105) in the nervous tissue of this sort. James therefore offers a first proposition for understanding habit: "*the phenomena of habit in living beings are due to the plasticity of the organic materials of which their bodies are composed*" (I.105). James therefore argued that "...the philosophy of habit..." is, at first, "...a chapter in physics rather than in physiology or psychology." James claimed to have the backing of "all good recent writers on the subject," in claiming that habit "...is at bottom a physical principle." These writers utilized memorable imagery to draw the parallel between physical events and habits. Quoting "M. Léon Dumont, whose essay on habit is perhaps the most philosophical account yet published," a habit is compared to "...a garment, [which] after having been worn a certain time, clings to the shape of the body better than when it was new" (I.105). Similarly, "It costs less trouble to fold a paper when it has been folded already..." (I.105-106). Both the garment and the paper possess a degree of plasticity. They possess an alterable structure, i.e., a structure weak enough to yield to the influence of body or hand, but the structure is strong enough to resist immediate conformity.

James admitted that it is not easy to ascertain precisely how the nervous system mimics the behavior of the worn garment or folded paper. He did, however, attempt "...to frame easily an abstract and general scheme of processes which the physical

changes in question *may* be like” (I.107).

“If habits are due to the plasticity of materials to outward agents, we can immediately see to what outward influences, if to any, the brain-matter is plastic” (I.107). The most relevant way to influence the brain, James argued, was through the input of the sensory nerves. Once these currents arrive in the brain, they “must find a way out.” As these currents depart, they “...leave their traces in the paths which they take,” either “...deepen[ing] old paths...” (I.107), or making new paths. The plasticity of the brain is understood in this light, as the ability of the brain to create stable paths which do not easily disappear. Although there is a difference between a “simple habit” such as biting one’s nails, and “complex habits,” the tendency of the brain to form paths is a constant.

The main difference between simple and complex habits is that complex habits involve the “concatenat[ion]” of reflexes, “...so organized as to wake each other up successively...” (I.108). When series of reflexes are concatenated, “...the impression produced by one muscular contraction serv[es] as a stimulus to provoke the next, until a final impression inhibits the process and closes the chain” (I.108).

James thought that “...nothing is easier than to imagine how, when a current once has traversed a path, it should traverse it more readily still a second time.” The thing that puzzled him, however, is what makes a current traverse a path for the first time. Again diminishing the role of the Arminian will, James did not believe that volitional processes could receive credit for this. Although many if not most human habits are at one point voluntary actions, these voluntary acts are not primary or originative. “While an habitual action may once have been voluntary, the voluntary action must before that, at least once, have been impulsive or reflex.” James attempted to account for the “very first occurrence

of all” (I.109).

James’s answer to this problem was that new pathways of habit are started by random. Generally speaking, the transformation of sensory input into motor output follows the path of least resistance, thus prohibiting the formation of a new habit. Yet, since “...a given point of the system may belong, actually or potentially, to many different paths, and, as the play of nutrition²³ is subject to accidental changes, *blocks* may from time to time occur, and make currents shoot through unwonted lines. Such an unwonted line would be a new-created path, which if traversed repeatedly, would become the beginning of a new reflex arc. All this is vague to the last degree, and amounts to little more than saying that a new path may be formed by the sort of *chances* that in nervous material are likely to occur. But, vague as it is, it is really the last word of our wisdom in the matter” (I.109).

James also called attention to the fact that plasticity, the invaluable phenomenon that allows structures to change, decreases with age. Quoting Carpenter, “It is a matter of universal experience that every kind of training for special aptitudes is both far more effective, and leaves a more permanent impress, when exerted on the *growing* organism than when brought to bear on the adult” (I.110). To James, this was a fact of utmost moral significance, and led him to engage in impassioned exhortation to his readers, who were still in “the plastic state” (I.127). “Dr. Carpenter’s phrase that *our nervous system grows to the modes in which it has been exercised* expresses the philosophy of habit in a nutshell” (I.112).

After tracing some of the basic postulates of the mechanism of habit formation,

²³James does not develop the concept of “nutrition” very well in this text. (The word appears 2 times in chapter 2; 0 times in chapter 3; 3 times in chapter 4).

James laid down several “practical applications.” This first of these was that “...*habit simplifies the movements required to achieve a given result, makes them more accurate and diminishes fatigue.*” This is an eminently useful function of habits, allowing a person to move from basic to more important activities (I.112). Recall that Upham had similarly stressed the usefulness of habits.

Since the number of tasks a normal human being must perform are “so enormous,” they cannot be “automatic” as is the case in animals, but are rather “...the fruit of painful study.” A human being unable to form habits would be “in a sorry plight,” because he would continually need to re-learn the most basic tasks, and could make no developmental progress (I.113).

The next application that James drew was directly related to volition. Contrary to Ames and Edwards, habits are by nature opposed to volitional actions: “...*habit diminishes the conscious attention with which our acts are performed.*” For James, volitional activities were necessarily conscious, intentional activities. When a complex habit, i.e., an act requiring a chain of “successive nervous events,” (such as walking, skating, or swimming) is being formed, each link in the chain must in its first performance be an effortful activity of “the conscious will.” Soon, however, a habit is formed when “...each event [in the chain] calls up its own appropriate successor without any alternative offering itself, and without any reference to the conscious will, until at last the whole chain...rattles itself off as soon as... [*the initiating event*] occurs...” (I.114).

Although “...learning to walk, to ride, to swim, skate, fence, write, play, or sing” involves mistake-laden effort, these activities gradually become automatic, freeing the person to engage in other activities, even while performing the now habitual activity

(I.114).

This freeing up of cognitive resources has a biological substrate. The habitual actions, occurring outside of immediate conscious awareness take place in the “lower centres” of the brain, while the “higher thought-centers,” oblivious to the habitual goings-on perform other activities. To demonstrate the largely unconscious nature of habitual activity he asked his readers to consider how “few men can tell off-hand which sock, shoe, or trousers-leg they put on first. They must first mentally rehearse the act; and even that is often insufficient—the act must be *performed*” (I.115).

Unlike truly volitional actions, which are instigated by thoughts or perceptions, habitual action is started by “...the *sensation occasioned by the muscular contraction just finished.*” James summarizes thus, “A strictly voluntary act has to be guided by idea, perception, and volition, throughout its whole course. In an habitual action, mere sensation is a sufficient guide, and the upper regions of brain and mind are set comparatively free” (I.115-116).

James thought the notion that volition is involved in habitual activity was antiquated. If the will is present at all in habitual activity, it “...limits itself to a *permission* that they exert their motor effects...” (I.118). James’s notion of will here is constricted compared to the notion entertained by Ames and Edwards. Habitual activity, reflective of a person’s character, was considered part of voluntary activity. Since James partitioned habit and will, he thought that the only role left for will when it came to habits was “permission.” This recalls my criticism of Upham’s view of Jesus Christ and of angels: since their characters were set and they possessed perfect harmony among all the faculties, they seemed to possess an entirely redundant and therefore useless will. James,

content with his Arminian presuppositions, approvingly quoted Carpenter, whose argument again expresses the diminishing role of Arminian volition in human psychology:

There may still be metaphysicians who maintain that actions which were originally prompted by the will with a distinct intention, and which are still entirely under its control, can never cease to be volitional; and that either an infinitesimally small amount of will is required to sustain them when they have been once set going, or that the will is in a sort of pendulum-like oscillation between the two actions - the maintenance of the train of *thought*, and the maintenance of the train of *movement*. But if only an infinitesimally small amount of will is necessary to sustain them, is not this tantamount to saying that they go on by a force of their own? (I.118).

Although habitual activity takes place outside of immediate awareness, James was still not convinced that consciousness was totally removed from habitual activity. If habits are not "...distinct acts of will..." James thought that the "...immediate antecedents of each movement of the chain are at any rate accompanied by consciousness of some kind." We do not usually pay attention to this consciousness, unless something goes wrong. An example of walking, borrowed from Schneider, shows the idea here. We are aware of our muscles and "certain impulses to keep our equilibrium" while we walk. Indeed, these feelings are necessary in order to walk (I.118).

So, in the case of walking or other habitual activity, the attendant sensations are "very faint" but still "necessary." Without these faint sensations, habitual activity would break down, for the elements in the chain of habitual activity are connected by these

sensations. “Imagine your hands not feeling; your movements could then only be provoked by ideas, and if your ideas were then diverted away, the movements ought to come to a standstill, which is a consequence that seldom occurs” (I.119). Instead, the faint sensations keep the whole habitual activity moving:

An idea makes you take, for example, a violin into your left hand. But it is not necessary that your idea remain fixed on the contraction of the muscles of the left hand and fingers in order that the violin may continue to be held fast and not let fall. *The sensations themselves* which the holding of the instrument awakens in the hand, since they are associated with the motor impulse of grasping, *are sufficient to cause this impulse...* (I.119)

Although it is possible to detect ethical undertones in James’s preliminary remarks on habit, he makes his moral concerns quite explicit in the last half of the chapter. The “very natural transition” from these physiological considerations was to “...the *ethical implications of the law of habit*.” Given that half of this chapter is dedicated to these implications, James appropriately noted that “they are numerous and momentous.” To justify this overtly moral section of the Principles, James cited Carpenter, “whose ‘Mental Physiology’...has so prominently enforced the principle that our organs grow to the way in which they have been exercised, and dwelt upon its consequences, that his book almost deserves to be called a work of edification, on this account alone.” Since Carpenter had gone the way of moral exhortation, James thought he needed to “...make no apology, then, for tracing a few of these [ethical] consequences...” himself (I.119).

James frequently contrasted determinism, mechanism, and fatality with

*possibility*²⁴. The topic of habit was important because habit defined and constrained possibility. The “veteran soldier” can attest to the power of habit to fashion “...a man completely over again...” so as to reorganize “...the possibilities of his conduct” (I.120). He also wondered at how “trained domestic animals seem to be machines almost pure and simple, undoubtingly, unhesitatingly doing from minute to minute the duties they have been taught, and giving no sign that the possibility of an alternative ever suggests itself to their mind” (I.119-120). The fact that James thought ‘alternatives’ were important for volition is telling. In Edwards and Ames, acting “undoubtingly, unhesitatingly” and without awareness of possibilities was an expression of will. Indeed, when the course taken is virtuous, Edwards argued, there is *less* likelihood of considering options. Edwards argued that God’s character, which never considers evil as an alternative, is an obvious example that acts of will do not require alternatives. Yet, for James, true to his Arminian impulses, volitions have to do with *choices* among alternatives. Will is the center of exertion and effort.

Given that habit limits decisions among alternatives, James surprisingly saw habit in positive light as “...the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent.” The limitation of possibility could thus serve society. Habit maintains order in society, and “...saves the children of fortune from the envious uprisings of the poor.” Habit keeps those engaged in “...the hardest and most repulsive walks of life...” from leaving their difficult stations in life. It keeps potential enemies from mobilizing hostile efforts. It prevents “...different social strata from mixing.” In short, “it dooms us all to fight out the battle of life upon the lines of our nurture or our early choice...” Although it may seem that James was arguing that habit was negative in this sense, and he

²⁴See his essay, “The Dilemma of Determinism,” for example.

undoubtedly did feel for those who had inherited the worst lots in life, he still acknowledged that this conservative function of habit was a positive thing: “On the whole, it is best he should not escape. It is well for the world that in most of us, by the age of thirty, the character has set like plaster, and will never soften again.” On the other hand, this somewhat stark portrait must have also served to frighten his students, and make them more attentive listeners to the moral exhortations which would follow. If we place James within the tradition of American pietism, we can see links between this strategy and the structure of the revivalistic sermon, which vividly portrayed the pains of hell before the good news of redemption was preached. The only difference is that the gospel could be preached to all. Given the constraints of neurology, however, James’s gospel could only be preached to the young.

Expanding the stark portrait, James linked the setting of the character to the loss of plasticity, and vividly described the immutability of habit after plasticity is lost. It therefore becomes clear that James’s previous discussions about plasticity do not apply to all. The “plastic state” lasts only into early adulthood. After that the person’s character is set, and chances of changing are minimal. Before the final setting of the character “by the age of thirty,” the “professional mannerism[s]” are locked in by twenty-five. These professional habits are utterly inflexible: “...the man can by-and-by no more escape than his coat-sleeve can suddenly fall into a new set of folds” (I.121). Here again James opposes character and will, an Arminian move. If one is to use more appropriate theological terms, James actually outlines a more “Pelagian” notion of salvation here: character is not in any way a gift, but is rather earned through effort and willpower.

Before the age of twenty, the personal habits are fixed, “such as vocalization and

pronunciation, gesture, motion, and address” (I.122). Even if a young adult has the good luck to be “transferred [into]...the society of his betters,” he will be unable to actually “...unlearn the nasality and other vices of speech bred in him by the associations of his growing years....” By implication, this young adult would never fit in. Habit thus serves as “an invisible law, as strong as gravitation,” which keeps the person “...within his orbit, arrayed this year as he was the last...” (I.122). Habit was a limiting factor, decreasing the possibility for self-determined and noncontingent action. A constraint of the freedom of the Arminian will.

James’s students thereby firmly seated on a physiological anxious bench, James articulated his doctrine: “The great thing, then, in all education, is to *make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy*” (I.122). Past behavior determines future possibilities. Store up useful actions. Avoid harmful ones. “It is to fund and capitalize our acquisitions, and live at ease upon the interest of the fund” (I.122). “*For this we must make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, as many useful actions as we can, and guard against the growing into ways that are likely to be disadvantageous to us, as we should guard against the plague*” (I.122). James is, then, arguing for the moral usefulness of automatism: “The more of the details of our daily life we can hand over to the effortless custody of automatism, the more our higher powers of mind will be set free for their own proper work” (I.122). By implication, opposed to the “effortless” nature of habit, volition is always effortful.

Like Upham, James expressed concern with indecisiveness. Indecision may be a habit. “There is no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision, and for whom the lighting of every cigar, the drinking of every cup, the

time of rising and going to bed every day, and the beginning of every bit of work, are subjects of express volitional deliberation. Full half the time of such a man goes to the deciding, or regretting, of matters which ought to be so ingrained in him as practically not to exist for his consciousness at all” (I.122). He therefore directly exhorts his readers. “If there be such daily duties not yet ingrained in any one of my readers, let him begin this very hour to set the matter right” (I.122).

Although the preceding seemed a bit hopeless for those over thirty-five, he does seem to leave a way out...but it is a very difficult road. To this end, James outlines four moral precepts or maxims which could be interpreted as applying not only to those still in the plastic state, but all people. Still, this is not certain. It is clear, however, that each of these maxims have to do with the Arminianized will. If one desires to form good habits, one must go through the means of the will. “In Professor Bain’s chapter on ‘The Moral Habits’ there are some admirable practical remarks laid down. Two great maxims emerge from his treatment. The first is that in the acquisition of a new habit, or the leaving off of an old one, we must take care to *launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible.*” (I.122-123). Effortful choice among alternatives, the essence of Arminian will, was crucial.

Still, James didn’t think we could rely on naked will power. A proper environment is important: “accumulate all the possible circumstances which shall re-enforce the right motives; put yourself assiduously in conditions that encourage the new way; make engagements incompatible with the old; take a public pledge, if the case allows...” (I.123). Yet, at base will power needs to be employed, and environmental considerations are meant to support the “resolution” made by the will. Environmental

manipulations add “momentum” to the resolution of the will, and prevent the reforming person from breaking down in the face of “temptation.” Although the possibility of “breakdown” in the face of temptation is strong, James thought that such breakdowns could be postponed, which added “...to the chances of [the breakdown] not occurring at all” (I.123).

James increased the anxiety as he described the “second maxim,” which was: *“Never suffer an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in your life.”* Although a person may engage in long periods of moral striving, “each lapse is like the letting fall of a ball of string which one is carefully winding up; a single slip undoes more than a great many turns will wind again.” As he was wont to do, James linked this principle to the nervous system, arguing that “*continuity of training is the great means of making the nervous system act infallibly right*” (I.123). To substantiate this scientific-sounding claim, he approvingly quoted Bain, whose admonitions seem to recapitulate the classic distinction between the sinful human nature and the spirit that had been standard fare for American Protestants for over two hundred years. Yet, the emphasis on the importance of effort to overcome the rivalry had been characteristic of the Arminian impulse:

The peculiarity of the moral habits, contradistinguishing them from the intellectual acquisitions, is the presence of two hostile powers, one to be gradually raised into the ascendant over the other. It is necessary, above all things, in such a situation, never to lose a battle. Every gain on the wrong side undoes the effect of many conquests on the right. The essential precaution, therefore, is so to regulate the two opposing powers that the one may have a series of uninterrupted

successes, until repetition has fortified it to such a degree as to enable it to cope with the opposition, under any circumstances. This is the theoretically best career of mental progress. (I.123)

Given the unforgiving nature of our physiology, James concluded that “the need of securing success at the *outset* is imperative. Failure at first is apt to dampen the energy of all future attempts, whereas past experience of success nerves one to future vigor” (I.123).

The unpitiful realities of habit formation led James to discourage the gradual abandonment of bad habits. Although “tapering-off” is appropriate in certain situations, the best approach is, “in the main...that abrupt acquisition of the new habit is the best way, *if there be a real possibility of carrying it out.*” Although it is important to keep the limits of will-power in mind so as “...not to give the will so stiff a task as to insure its defeat at the very outset,” it was better by far to endure a “a sharp period of suffering,” than to prolong the life of bad habit by continuing to engage in the undesired act. James encouraged his students to give it a try: “It is surprising how soon a desire will die of inanition if it be *never* fed” (I.124).

In addition to Bain’s wisdom, James added two additional maxims. James believed that human beings were liable to experience morally decisive moments in which a would-be reformer has opportunity to reform, if he or she complies with the grace given in the moment. The argument is similar to the Methodist idea of prevenient grace, that God by virtue of the universality of Christ’s atonement gave grace to all people which then enabled the sinner to turn to God in faith. As we have seen, Upham offered a modified understanding of this doctrine, and James offers what may be called a

naturalistic doctrine of prevenient grace.

James's third maxim, then, was to "*Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain*" (I.123). Recalling his discussion of the physiology of habit formation, he reminded his students that "it is not in the moment of their [i.e., the habit's] forming, but in the moment of their producing *motor effects*, that resolves and aspirations communicate the new 'set' to the brain" (I.124).

Recapitulating the familiar American pietistic refrain against mere head knowledge, James warned that habit formation did not necessarily follow having a "...full...reservoir of *maxims*..." Following the teaching of mental philosophers such as Upham, James insisted that virtuous acts of will would not follow upon the mere possession of pious sentiment. Rather, in order to reform the "character," one must take advantage of "...every concrete opportunity to *act*..." These opportunities take the form of "...a resolve or a fine glow of feeling..." (I.125) which tend toward the desired outcome. In his chapter on the will, James alludes to other similar occasions of naturalized prevenient grace.

James forcefully condemned those who did not take advantage of such opportunities. When opportunities are allowed to pass by "...without bearing practical fruit..." the individual is actually worse off than before. The failure to comply with the benevolent propensity "...works so as positively to hinder future resolutions and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge" (I.125). Indeed, neglect of *particular* moral impulses leads to *general* moral dissipation (I.126). Further, such neglect of opportunity leads to a "...contemptible type of human character..." which James called "...the

nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer...” This person “...spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility and emotion, but...never does a manly concrete deed.” Practically speaking, James warned against “the habit of excessive novel-reading and theatre-going...” which frequently produce sentiment without action. If unchecked, this habit could result in moral “monsters” (I.125). The harshness and self-righteousness of Arminian morality is evident once again in this passage.

Since it is only the person who responds to virtuous impulses that becomes virtuous, James encouraged his students to actively express each impulse. Even if the impulse is to a minor good, such as “...speaking genially to one’s aunt, or giving up one’s seat in a horse-car...” the action *must* take place if a moral character is to be formed (I.126).

The fourth maxim is related to the third. Just as neglect of virtuous impulse tends to worsen the character, so too a neglect of opportunity to exercise *moral effort* diminishes the strength of future effort. “...If we often flinch from making an effort, before we know it the effort-making capacity will be gone...” Similarly, “...if we suffer the wandering of our attention, presently it will wander all the time.” The concepts of effort and attention were crucial aspect of James’s psychology of volition, and he expands on these concepts in other chapters, particularly his chapters on attention and will. The fourth maxim, then, is to “*Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day*” (I.126):

That is, be systematically ascetic or heroic in little unnecessary points, do every day or two something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it, so that when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and

untrained to stand the test. Asceticism of this sort is like the insurance which a man pays on his house and goods. The tax does him no good at the time, and possibly may never bring him a return. But if the fire *does* come, his having paid it will be his salvation from ruin. So with the man who has daily inured himself to habits of concentrated attention, energetic volition, and self-denial in unnecessary things. He will stand like a tower when everything rocks around him, and when his softer fellow-mortals are winnowed like chaff in the blast. (I.126-127)

James thus concluded his biologizing of ethics with the assertion that “the physiological study of mental conditions is thus the most powerful ally of hortatory ethics” (I.127).

The bleak picture he painted at the beginning of the chapter was no mistake: the dismal effects of poorly formed habits are equivalent to hell on earth. “The hell to be endured hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our characters in the wrong way” (I.127).

Given the realities of plasticity, James thought his insights into habit formation were particularly relevant to his students. “Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone” (I.127).

Unlike the revivalistic sermons of American pietism, James did not offer hope for those who had lived shamefully. Grace may be found in heaven, but there is no mercy in biology. The nervous system records every infraction, and, over time, becomes increasingly unwilling to forgive:

Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never so little scar. The

drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, 'I won't count this time!' Well! he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve-cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. (I.127)

But hope still remained for the young, and James chose to close his chapter on habit on a positive note. Just as morally contemptible habits are formed through successive poor choices, so too are virtuous habits formed through moral constancy. Therefore, James encouraged his young readers, "let no youth have any anxiety...", for as long as they "...keep faithfully busy each hour of the working-day, [they] may safely leave the final result to itself" (I.127).

The Automaton Theory and the Efficiency of Consciousness

In chapter V of The Principles of Psychology, James turned his attention to yet another threat to human efficiency: the so-called "automaton-theory." Here, as was the case in his chapter on the functions of the brain, it is not as clear that James is defending a particularly "Arminian" will, although he does at one point lean in that direction. Since the automaton-theory challenged the causal efficacy of consciousness, a postulate that both Calvinists and Arminians had embraced, James's refutation may be seen as a defense of the entire indigenous tradition.

Earlier in the Principles, James had apologized in a footnote for mixing mental and physiological language. Although this mixing was quite intentional, James was still concerned that certain "racially physical" readers would criticize him for his

anachronistic inconsistency. “I hope that the reader will take no umbrage at my so mixing the physical and mental, and talking of reflex acts and hemispheres and reminiscences in the same breath, as if they were homogeneous quantities and factors of one causal chain.” James agreed that there was a certain parsimony in speaking of physiological events only (i.e., ignoring mental events), but thought that such an undertaking would be “an unreal abstraction,” since it appears that mental events may actually “guide” physical events. James then promised to offer in another chapter “...reasons for not abandoning this common-sense position” (I.24).

In his chapter on the automaton theory, James kept his promise to address the concerns of his more radical readers. If we take the materialistic approach and limiting our view to the nervous system, we suppose that the brain is an extraordinarily complex machine, and that there are physiological events corresponding precisely to each mental event. It is unimaginable to the materialist that this could not actually be the case. However, this way of thinking, James argued, *forced* the radical physiologist to take another, more radical step: to assume that reference to mental events is superfluous. Utilizing the “principle of continuity” the radical physiologist may thus argue: “The conception of reflex action is surely one of the best conquests of physiological theory; why not be radical with it? Why not say that just as the spinal cord is a machine with few reflexes, so the hemispheres are a machine with many, and that that is all the difference?” (I.129).

James challenged this way of thinking on functional grounds. What possible use would consciousness have in this scheme? It would certainly have no mechanical function, for all activity would take place at the physiological level. Consciousness in

this respect would be reduced to a bystander or an “inert spectator,” incapable of contributing anything to the process. It would, correspondingly, be impossible to speak of purposes or “considerations” guiding the behavior of the animal. To be consistent, the radical physiologist would need to employ strictly physiological language to describe animal behavior: “We ought to have said ‘paths left in the hemispherical cortex by former currents,’ and nothing more.”

James was convinced that contemporary readers did not fully understand the implications of such a radical viewpoint. In order to help his readers, he actually attempted to express the theory in as compelling a way as possible before he articulated his refutation. As he often did throughout the Principles, James plays historian to bring his student up to date. It was Descartes who was first “...bold enough to conceive of a completely self-sufficing nervous mechanism which should be able to perform complicated and apparently intelligent acts.” But Descartes imposed an “arbitrary” distinction between humans and animals such that animals could be understood as pure machinery without consciousness, but that “...the higher acts of man were the result of the agency of his rational soul” (I.130). One of the implications of Descartes’ theory is that “...the nervous system *per se* might work the work of intelligence...” Although it took over two hundred years for this possibility to take hold, the rise of the notion of reflex action made the radical idea plausible in James’s time. The radicalism started in 1870 with Hodgson’s “decisive step,” which was to deny the “causal efficacy” of the feelings. Other radical theoreticians followed. Two of these radical thinkers figured prominently in James’s mind. The quotes that James includes in his text show that the challenge to efficacy of consciousness was above all a challenge to the notion of will itself. First,

James quoted Huxley:

The consciousness of brutes would appear to be related to the mechanism of their body simply as a collateral product of its working, and to be as completely without any power of modifying that working as the steam-whistle which accompanies the work of a locomotive engine is without influence on its machinery. Their volition, if they have any, is an emotion *indicative* of physical changes, not a *cause* of such changes....The soul stands related to the body as the bell of a clock to the works, and consciousness answers to the sound which the bell gives out when it is struck... Thus far I have strictly confined myself to the automatism of brutes....It is quite true that, to the best of my judgment, the argumentation which applies to brutes holds equally good of men; and, therefore, that all states of consciousness in us, as in them, are immediately caused by molecular changes of the brain-substance. It seems to me that in men, as in brutes, there is no proof that any state of consciousness is the cause of change in the motion of the matter of the organism. If these positions are well based, it follows that our mental conditions are simply the symbols in consciousness of the changes which take place automatically in the organism; and that, to take an extreme illustration, the feeling we call volition is not the cause of a voluntary act, but the symbol of that state of the brain which is the immediate cause of that act. We are conscious automata. (I.131, underlines added)

James then quoted Clifford:

All the evidence that we have goes to show that the physical world gets along entirely by itself, according to practically universal rules. . . . The train of physical

facts between the stimulus sent into the eye, or to any one of our senses, and the exertion which follows it, and the train of physical facts which goes on in the brain, even when there is no stimulus and no exertion, - these are perfectly complete physical trains, and every step is fully accounted for by mechanical conditions. . . . The two things are on utterly different platforms - the physical facts go along by themselves, and the mental facts go along by themselves. There is a parallelism between them, but there is no interference of one with the other. Again, if anybody says that the will influences matter, the statement is not untrue, but it is nonsense. Such an assertion belongs to the crude materialism of the savage. The only thing which influences matter is the position of surrounding matter or the motion of surrounding matter. . . . The assertion that another man's volition, a feeling in his consciousness that I cannot perceive, is part of the train of physical facts which I may perceive, - this is neither true nor untrue, but nonsense; it is a combination of words whose corresponding ideas will not go together. . . . Sometimes one series is known better, and sometimes the other; so that in telling a story we speak sometimes of mental and sometimes of material facts. A feeling of chill made a man run; strictly speaking, the nervous disturbance which coexisted with that feeling of chill made him run, if we want to talk about material facts; or the feeling of chill produced the form of sub-consciousness which coexists with the motion of legs, if we want to talk about mental facts. . . . When, therefore, we ask: 'What is the physical link between the ingoing message from chilled skin and the outgoing message which moves the leg?' and the answer is, 'A man's will,' we have as much right to be amused as if

we had asked our friend with the picture what pigment was used in painting the cannon in the foreground, and received the answer, 'Wrought iron.' It will be found excellent practice in the mental operations required by this doctrine to imagine a train, the fore part of which is an engine and three carriages linked with iron couplings, and the hind part three other carriages linked with iron couplings; the bond between the two parts being made up out of the sentiments of amity subsisting between the stoker and the guard." (I.131-132, underlines added)

Huxley argued that consciousness is caused by physiological events, and that the feeling of volition is simply one state of consciousness. Huxley goes out of his way to challenge the authenticity of the feeling of conscious will. Clifford likewise argues that the physical world is self-contained and the mental world is self-contained. The two worlds cannot influence each other. To ask if the will causes a physical event to happen is nonsense. Either way, by reducing volition to an effect of the nervous system, or by separating volition from psychical events through a strict parallelism, is to make the will as understood by James irrelevant. Since in both arguments consciousness simply "run[s] alongside" (I.133) brain physiology James saw these two quotes as enunciating the same "dogma," which he found the doctrine incredible, particularly when applied to "...the most complicated examples." For example, did the automaton theorists really believe that Shakespeare's mind had nothing to do with the way "...his hand came to trace on certain sheets of paper those crabbed little black marks which we for shortness' sake call the manuscript of Hamlet"? (I.132).

Another implication of the belief that consciousness was a by-product of the brain was that feelings cannot cause each other. Instead each successive feeling, which

“common sense” perceives to be causally related to each other, is simply a result of successive changes in physiology alone. James’s recourse to common sense, of course, represents another continuity with the indigenous tradition.

James noted that a main reason for believing in the “conscious automaton-theory” was based upon an argument from continuity. For example, these theorists would take the frog’s spinal cord as the starting point, noting how the organism can produce intelligent action while unconscious. Then, by continuity, the automaton theorists would say that an organism *with* hemispheres likewise acts intelligently without consciousness. But this reasoning was a double-edged sword, for an “...exact counter-argument from continuity...” could be made, that just as organisms with hemispheres act intelligently because of consciousness, so too the intelligence of spinal cord-related activity must involve some small degree of consciousness. Since, “all arguments from continuity work in two ways,” James argued that belief in *either* theory depends upon a kind of faith, which is, at base, an aesthetic need. The simplicity of a purely materialistic or spiritualistic hypothesis meets this need. Yet, James thought that the reality of the situation was messier and more difficult to understand (I.134).

More than an aesthetic need was at stake however. James acknowledged that we simply cannot understand *how* a “volition or other thought” might actually influence the nervous system. Given this difficulty, the strong temptation was simply to turn consciousness into a superfluity. Although “one may bow her out politely, [and] allow her to remain as a ‘concomitant,’” yet one still “...insists that matter shall hold all the power.”

Given James’s predilection for mystery, it is not surprising that he approvingly

quoted Charles Mercier, who argued that mind and brain not only occur together, but influence one another: “but *why* the two occur together, or what the link is which connects them, we do not know, and most authorities believe that *we never shall and never can know*” (I.136. Italics mine). Given the close connection between mind and brain, James thought it “...quite inconceivable that consciousness should have *nothing to do* with a business which it so faithfully attends” (I.136).

James further believed that psychology had a “plain duty” to consider consciousness as a causally efficacious phenomenon. It was wrong-headed and one-sided for the automaton-theorists to argue that the causal connection between consciousness and neurology is unintelligible because this neglects the philosophical achievement of Hume and others who had shown that *material* causation is ultimately inexplicable as well. So, for the reductionists “...to pull the pall over the psychic half of the subject only” (I.137), is to be irresponsibly arbitrary. One must reject causality entirely, or be naive to both kinds of causes. To take a one-sided position was to take a metaphysical position, which was out-of-bounds for a science of psychology, which, like physics, must take a philosophically naive viewpoint. Given that “common-sense” and introspection testifies to the causal efficacy of mental states, [and given that introspection is the pre-eminent psychological method] psychology *must* therefore study states of consciousness.

Like the mental philosophers before him, James appeared to be blind to the degree to which his consciousness was shaped by his religious background. He took it as a given that consciousness, including volition, matters. This undoubtedly still seems a reasonable assumption for most people. But it is clear that another kind of consciousness was emerging on the world scene which was learning to see its conscious states as mere

epiphenomenon. And James's arguments could do nothing to hold this emerging subjectivity from holding sway. James prophesied that "it is probable that for years to come we shall have to infer what happens in the brain either from our feelings or from motor effects which we observe" (I.137-138). Probable, that is, if the need for parsimony and the aversion to mystery did not take over American psychology.

James summarized his position thus: "my conclusion is that to urge the automaton-theory upon us, as it is now urged, on purely *a priori* and *quasi*-metaphysical grounds, is an *unwarrantable impertinence in the present state of psychology*" (I.138).

James also offered positive reasons for believing in the causal efficacy of consciousness. Specifically, "the *particulars of the distribution of consciousness*, so far as we know them, *point to its being efficacious*" (I.138). James's main argument was a Darwinistic account of the need for consciousness. It was universally assumed that some animals have a greater degree of consciousness. James compares the oyster to the human as an example. In Darwinistic terms, consciousness must offer some advantage to those so endued. Further, one can assume that this advantage must make up for some lack in the other equipment that a given animal possesses. If one knows the weaknesses of a given animal, then one may inductively determine what kind of equipment may make up for the lack.

In order to understand the "defects" of the neural equipment given to animals with highly developed consciousness, James referred his readers back to his chapter on brain structure and function. It may be recalled that James argued that the main difference between a decorticate and whole frog was the *indeterminacy* of its behavior when fully functioning. When reduced to a spinal cord, the responses of the frog were highly

predictable, but the responses become much less predictable when the hemispheres of the frog were left intact. This indeterminacy is increased in more complex animals, i.e., animals with larger hemispheres. James thought that consciousness was “added” so that the complexity and indeterminacy of this evolved neural machinery would be put to the greatest advantage. But, if this neural machinery is considered abstractly, i.e., without the directing force of its concomitant consciousness, the behavior of an animal with well-developed hemispheres must be unstable, even random. “The brain is an instrument of possibilities, but of no certainties” (I.141). Surely, James thought, mere *possibility* of survival is not enough; unstable behavior does not facilitate survival. When consciousness is added to the mix, however, the complex neural machinery is put to best use because consciousness by its very nature seeks its own preservation: “Every actually existing consciousness seems to itself at any rate to be a *fighter for ends*” (I.141). And this is the great difference between consciousness and mere machinery. Machinery cannot pursue or desire ends. Machinery is by nature indifferent to its own survival. So, although James admitted to not knowing how consciousness and brain worked together, he was quite certain that it had an indispensable use for the survival of the animal.

To this rather involved argument, James added several other simpler arguments. He noted the link between certain “nerve processes” and consciousness. Consciousness is nearly absent during habitual action, i.e., in situations that require little effort or attention. But, when many possibilities are presented to the animal, and “...nerve-processes are hesitant,” the proper choice is not clear to the animal so consciousness intervenes, guiding the animal through the difficult situation.

James had commented on the restitution of function in chapter II, the process

whereby the loss of function due to cortical injury is restored eventually. One theory to explain this restoration was the vicarious theory, which held that the remaining, non-injured parts of the brain eventually picked up the slack, so to speak, and performed the task that had been assigned to the damaged part of the brain. James, in what seems to be his weakest argument on this topic, appears to have argued that consciousness may have something to do with this restitution. He notes that a broken machine will not fix itself. The teleological character of consciousness may actually “...exert an efficient pressure...” in the restoration process.

Finally, James noted that “...*pleasures are generally associated with beneficial, pains with detrimental, experiences*” (I.143). “Starvation, suffocation, privation of food,” etc. are associated with pain, while “...filling the hungry stomach, enjoying rest and sleep after fatigue, exercise after rest...” are felt as pleasurable. James thought that these conscious states must have had causal efficacy. “But if pleasures and pains have no efficacy, one does not see...why the most noxious acts, such as burning, might not give thrills of delight, and the most necessary ones, such as breathing, cause agony.”

James concluded this chapter by saying that the evidence was clearly in favor of the usefulness of consciousness, and that the usefulness of consciousness must be by way of its causal efficacy. Therefore, “...the automaton-theory must succumb to the theory of commonsense.” But it is noteworthy how significantly the great American tradition of commonsense reasoning had evolved in James. James, like the American mental philosophers before him, thought that the causal efficacy of consciousness was clear. Yet, by employing a Darwinistic rationalization, James moved further away from the rationalizations that had sustained the topic of will *per se*, and offered no compelling

reason to consider the topic valid. This subtle transformation is borne out in the way the word ‘volition’ was used in this chapter. When speaking of *human* consciousness, e.g., in the quotes by Huxley and Clifford, volition was clearly at stake, and the term was utilized. But, when James shifted to speak of the adaptive nature of consciousness, he clearly no longer needed to speak of human beings. The question that was not answered in James’s refutation of the automaton theory, then, is: Although it is clear that consciousness is a necessary part of human and animal experience, is there any reason to believe that “*the will*” is a necessary part of consciousness?

Clearly, James arguments were not sufficient to keep Huxley *et al.*’s sentiment from dominating American psychology. And, with the advent of behaviorism, all consciousness would be removed from psychology’s purview, including volition. But, given James’s argument for consciousness, there would be no reason that will should be included in any future revival of interest in the topic of consciousness.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter sought to affirm that James was indeed justifying or at least providing the groundwork for the “Arminian impulse” by confronting, as George Trumbull Ladd once put it, “all that modern materialism has to offer” (Mills, 1969, p. 100) and emerging victorious. This chapter dealt with chapters I-V of Principles of Psychology, which, in turn, dealt with physiology. These chapters in the Principles were consequential from vantage point of the loss of will because the very efficiency of consciousness was being called into question by some leading European thinkers. James faced this challenge squarely.

James criticized leading contemporary approaches to psychology for failing to take physiology into account. Certainly this critique applied to Thomas Upham, who made only passing mention of physiology in his text, and seemed determined to show that it did not really matter much for the psychologist. Such a critique is, of course, a bit presentist, but the fact that James was breaking new ground on the American scene cannot be denied. Yet, since both Upham and James had the “Arminian impulse,” the goals of the two psychologies were not, after all, *that* different. Even at this early stage in Principles, James argues that the employment of physiology does not mean the eradication of purposive choice from the universe.

In his long chapter on the functions of the brain (chapter II), James argued that brain physiology, far from implying that human beings are mere machines, shows that purpose and consciousness are intimately linked. In the third chapter of Principles, James dealt with reaction time experiments that purportedly dealt with voluntary processes. James argued that these experiments reduced voluntary exercises to reflexes: a position unacceptable to a secular “Arminian” like William James. He therefore offered an extended analysis of the Wundtian methods to show that they indeed do not measure what they say they do.

James’s chapter on habit also reveals the Arminian side of his psychology. Habits are part of the “character” of the person, and have a physiological basis. A person remains in the “plastic state” (in which the underlying physiological substrate of action is pliable) only until young adulthood. When this plasticity is lost, the character hardens. Given these physiological and moral realities, James passionately exhorted his readers to engage in effortful habit formation and encouraged youth to use their wills to shape good

character while they can. The imagery is sometimes threatening. In this chapter, then, James does not deny that physiological characteristics imply a loss of will, but he offers ways that will may use these physiological constraints to the advantage of the person. Yet, implied throughout is an Arminian definition of will: effortful choice among alternatives. Habit and will are entirely different things. In the older conception espoused by Ames and Edwards, by contrast, will was a broad concept that would have *included* habit/character.

James chapter on the automaton theory (chapter V) challenged the European theory that consciousness is useless, possessing no causal efficacy. For an “Arminian” psychologist such as James, who relied on great exertions of the will to effect meaningful moral change, such a conception could not be left unchallenged. His refutation included accusing the automaton theorists of being arbitrary in their insistence that only material causes can be known.

CHAPTER XI

“ALL THAT THE...ADVOCATE OF FREE WILL NEED DEMAND”

It was not until dispensing with “the physiological preliminaries of our subject...” that James felt ready to move on to study “the mental states themselves” (I.183). Yet, just as James’s forays into physiology were performed with the intent of carving out some space for human efficiency, so too James’s study of mental life preserves and protects a space, a *small* space, for that precious but elusive “Arminian” idol, a non-derived, uncaused efficiency. As James moves through the concepts of the stream of thought (chapter IX), the self (chapter X), attention (chapter XI), association (chapter XIV), and belief (chapter XXI), he consistently finds a place for libertarian freedom in the otherwise overwhelmingly determined territory called the human mind.

The Methods and Snares of Psychology

It is perhaps surprising that James did not begin to address mentality until the seventh chapter of The Principles of Psychology. A natural question to ask would be, Why did he wait? As I have argued above, one reason may have been the concern that physiology was impinging upon human freedom, and the need to find freedom within the constraints of physiology. Another reason was James’s acknowledgement that physiology really does define the “cerebral conditions and concomitants” of consciousness. Yet another reason, it is possible that there was a rhetorical advantage to delaying the detailed study of consciousness. It helped to establish the *newness* of the New Psychology. Finally, it was consistent with his goal of making psychology a natural

science, free from metaphysical concerns.

Describing psychology as a natural science, James immediately excluded the ontologically grounded psychology of a William Ames, who began his Marrow with a careful examination of the mind of God, in terms of his will and counsel. The psychologist “has nothing to do” with “...absolute Intelligence, Mind unattached to a particular body, or Mind not subject to the course of time...” Rather, the kinds of minds that a scientific psychology must limit itself to are the minds of “...distinct individuals inhabiting definite portions of a real space and of a real time” (I.183). James did not reject the other kind of study, but, adopting his typical irenic tone, limited the domain of psychology to the empirical observable realm (including consciousness in that observable realm). Just as non-denominational irenicism is a crucial aspect of the American mental philosophy tradition, James’s philosophically noncommittal stance represents a further continuity with the indigenous tradition. Instead of mediating differences between Christian denominations like Upham, James was mediating differences between schools of philosophy.

The psychologist considers all minds as objects, including his own. Consciousness is object when the psychologist “reflects on his own conscious states,” and when he considers the conscious states of others. James further distinguished the role of the psychologist as natural scientist from that of the philosopher. Unlike Upham, who was concerned with epistemological issues (particularly in volume 1 of Mental Philosophy), James said that the psychologist simply *assumes* that knowledge is possible, and so avoids the perplexing issues of epistemology (which demonstrates Guelzo’s [1989] contention that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American preoccupation

with skepticism was misplaced. The real threat on the horizon was materialism, the very materialism that James was grappling with).

Four things constitute “...the irreducible data of psychology.” The first is the psychologist. The second, third, and fourth things are the “total object” of the psychologist: the thought studied, the thought’s object, and the psychologist’s reality. As such, the psychologist is not troubled with “...the puzzle of how he can report [mental phenomena] at all” (I.184). The assumption that thought always has an object had, of course, been a central aspect of psychological thought in America since the time of Ames. Yet, as I will develop more fully later, the most crucial shift that we find in this psychological thinking is a movement away from the Object of faith to the multiplicity of objects that capture the attention of consciousness on a moment-to-moment basis. This shift from Object to objects is related both to the phenomenon of pluralism and to the ultimate loss of will in American psychology. The exclusive focus on a particular object of faith, such as the efficient God of William Ames was not possible as American colleges became more denominationally diverse. Rather than focusing attention on how the mind perceives and reacts to the Object, then, the focus shifted to non-controversial objects. As will become more clear below, this difficulty in “naming the object” of volition may have been one of the factors leading to the loss of will in American psychology.

This transformation was relevant to the loss of will in American psychology. Just as the notion of a faculty of will arose in Augustine’s thought *vis-à-vis* the Christian God and the origin of evil, so too was the concept sustained in American colleges *vis-à-vis* some permutation of Protestant thought. The notion of will, in other words, had required

some Object of ultimate choice, some object which made a demarcation between good and bad decision. Without this demarcation, it becomes difficult to distinguish will from simple desire.

Methods of Investigation

James's discussion of "the methods of investigation" contains clues as to why this chapter was placed so far into the book. Contiguous with the indigenous mental philosophy tradition²⁵, James believed that "*Introspective Observation is what we have to rely on first and foremost and always*" (I. 185). Introspection is simply "...the looking into our own minds and reporting what we there discover." The fact that one discovers "states of consciousness" through introspection was to James one of the only truths that remained beyond doubt in an age that had learned to question almost everything else.

All people unhesitatingly believe that they feel themselves thinking, and that they distinguish the mental state as an inward activity or passion, from all the objects with which it may cognitively deal. *I regard this belief as the most fundamental of all the postulates of Psychology...* (I.185)

James addressed the "question of nomenclature," i.e., the decision concerning what words to use in describing mental states. His discussion is also relevant to the loss of will in American psychology. His goal was to utilize "some general term...to designate all states of consciousness merely as such, and apart from their particular quality or cognitive function." All terminology is imperfect, however, and inevitably

²⁵Introspective analysis was not limited to the American scene, of course. As James noted, "The English writers on psychology, and the school of Herbart in Germany, have in the main contented themselves with such results as the immediate introspection of single individuals gave, and shown what a body of doctrine they may make. The works of Locke, Hume, Reid, Hartley, Stewart Brown, the Mills, will always be classics in this line ; and in Professor Bain's Treatises we have probably the last word of what this method taken mainly by itself can do." This is a good example of how acknowledging continuity with the American tradition does not imply that the American tradition always had a causal relation to the New Psychology.

some people will object to the terminology chosen. The choice of terminology should be as “impartial” as possible, and certain terms actually “implicitly assert theories.” This too, I think, is a crucial insight for understanding the loss of will in American psychology. Historically, the term “will,” as utilized in American college textbooks, had implicitly asserted a theory, i.e., some form of Protestant theology. The use of the term “will” by the New Psychology was in this sense uncritical, failing to inquire what assumptions the construct had required. This is an issue that has, of course, arisen throughout the dissertation.

Additionally, James argued that the general term used to apply to consciousness in general should also be able to incorporate bodily sensation. Due to the fact that ‘colder’ words such as “thought” do not adequately convey such sensation (“can the expression ‘thought of a toothache’ ever suggest to the reader the actual present pain itself? It is hardly possible;” I.186), James thought that a “pair of terms” is probably best to satisfactorily encompass the mental content of consciousness. James preferred to use the terms thought and feeling. “The mind’s relations to other objects than the brain are *cognitive and emotional* relations exclusively, so far as we know. It *knows* them, and it inwardly *welcomes or rejects* them, but it has no other dealings with them” (I.216). He went on to explain that, “the mental states usually distinguished as feelings are the *emotions*, and the *sensations* we get from skin, muscle, viscus, eye, ear, nose, and palate. The ‘thoughts,’ as recognized in popular parlance, are the *conceptions*, and *judgments*” (I. 222). James was, I think, consistent in his introspective musings with this general assertion. His distinction, for example, between mere thought and belief reflected this. Belief was, as we might call it today “hot cognition,” i.e., affect-infused thought (e.g.,

Forgas, 1995).

More importantly, this affirmation of a pair of terms would imply that James in some sense affirmed the traditional dichotomization of faculties that dominated American thought until the nineteenth century. James did, of course, criticize faculty psychology, but this criticism, focusing on the problems of reification and self-determination (Kosits, 2002c), did not apply to the way the term was used by Ames and Edwards, who used the terms intellect and will to describe different functions of the soul rather than different reified beings. James's "Arminianism," however, may have lead him to recapitulate the very fallacy that he repudiated, as we will see in the discussion of James's chapter on the will. Yet this tension is evident in his thinking about will. As we shall see throughout this chapter, James sometimes speaks of will in a broader, more Edwardsean sense, as the inclining and preferring aspect of consciousness, while, at other times, speaks in a more "Arminian" sense, presenting will as effortful choice among alternatives.

James was well aware of the bias involved with the introspective method. James tried to steer a middle path between those who would deny that introspective knowledge of the mind is impossible and those who claimed that introspective knowledge is infallible. Following John Mill, James thought that mental events were knowable through memory, even if they are not directly observable. His conclusion was that although "...*introspection is difficult and fallible...*", that difficulty is not limited to introspective analysis, but "all observation" (I.191).

It is evident throughout the *Principles* that James also affirmed the experimental method. As is well known, James was a bit ambivalent about the experimental approach to psychology, and, as we shall see below, doubted its ability to access higher-level

cognitive functions like volition (see comments on chapter 3). James explained the experimental aspect of psychology to his readers thus: “Within a few years what one may call a microscopic psychology has arisen in Germany, carried on by experimental methods, asking of course every moment for introspective data, but eliminating their uncertainty by operating on a large scale and taking statistical means.” The adjective “microscopic” illuminates James’s ambivalence about this methodology. Given his comments on the inherent uncertainty of introspection, his comment that experiment attempted to eliminate uncertainty is also instructive; it shows that James thought that the European experimental psychologists were perhaps trying to accomplish an impossible task. After unleashing his famous critique of experimentalism as being a method that “...taxes patience to the utmost...” and which “...could hardly have arisen in a country whose natives could be *bored*,” (I.192) James did, however, offer some comments that suggested that he did perhaps see *some* good in the method.

James saw the comparative method as a supplement to introspection and experimentation. Comparative psychologists studied various animals and non-normal humans in order to throw light on the development of the features of consciousness. James thought a measure of humility was needed in comparative psychology since it possessed “...great sources of error...” (I.194), not the least of which was that the subjectivity of observers tended to skew the reported results.

Finally, James expressed concern about “the *great* snare of the psychologist,” which is “*The Psychologist’s Fallacy*.” His overriding concern here may be summarized as the worry that the psychologist imposes his own viewpoint on his subject, and so misses out on the full range of human experience. The fallacy keeps the psychologist

from understanding what people *really* think and do and say, etc. Faulty psychological vocabulary also keeps the psychologist from understanding the object of his investigation. In some sense, I think, even James committed this fallacy when speaking of the will. He assumed that other people shared his belief that “will” was a valid subjectivity. More specifically, he assumed that others shared his “Arminian” consciousness of will as moral struggle and self-effort.

The Stream of Thought

It is not until chapter IX “The Stream of Consciousness” that James began his “...study of the mind from within” (I.224). He noted that most psychological texts began their analysis with sensation, as “...the simplest mental facts, and proceed synthetically, constructing each higher stage from those below it.” The problem with this approach is that it is an abandonment of the empirical approach to psychology. James wanted to stick to consciousness, and what consciousness actually contains. Beginning with sensation or some other preconceived psychological a priori does violence to psychology by distorting its subject matter: “no one ever had a simple sensation by itself,” When James looked within himself, he found “...a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations...”

As previously noted, James thought that the basic assumptions of psychology include the psychologist, the thought studied, the object of the thought studied, and the reality of the psychologist. The observation was made in passing that James’s concern with the totality of psychological experience, and the correlative interest in a plurality of objects of thought, represented an important difference from the theological psychology of an Ames or an Edwards, who were concerned with the motions of the mind in relation to the “efficient” Object, or a Thomas Upham, who “named” several worthy moral

objects of volition. The chapter on the stream of thought expands upon this pluralistic approach to mind, and James's comment, quoted above, that consciousness is "...a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations..." typifies James's approach.

Focusing on the full range of psychological experience can be understood as contiguous with the irenical nature of American mental philosophy, which, as we have seen, had to move away from an exclusive focus on a particular definition of the Object. As I hope to make clear, this irenical impulse and its pluralistic concomitants did, however, put the topic of the will on increasingly shaky ground.

Introspection clearly testifies to the fact that "*thinking of some sort goes on...*" (I.224), and James listed five specific ways that thinking "goes on."

- 1) Every thought tends to be part of a personal consciousness.
- 2) Within each personal consciousness thought is always changing.
- 3) Within each personal consciousness thought is sensibly continuous.
- 4) It always appears to deal with objects independent of itself.
- 5) It is interested in some parts of these objects to the exclusion of others, and welcomes or rejects - *chooses* from among them, in a word - all the while. (I.225)

Here James again uses the word "choice" broadly (i.e., in a more Edwardsean manner), as he had in chapter 2, on the functions of consciousness. Yet, as the chapter progresses his usage takes on a more decidedly "Arminian" tone.

James proceeded to discuss each of these characteristics of thought in turn, admitting that he would have to use psychological jargon that "every one knows." The first four characteristics of consciousness are less relevant than the fifth, so I will briefly summarize them. Regarding the first characteristic, James perceived that "each of these

minds keeps its own thoughts to itself. There is no giving or bartering between them.” This implies that, in some sense, each mind is an island unto itself, and so there is an “irreducible pluralism” (I.226) in consciousness. The second characteristic, that within each personal consciousness thought is “in constant change,” is that “...*no state once gone can recur and be identical with what it was before.*” There is, nevertheless, a continuity regarding the object perceived: “*What is got twice is the same OBJECT*” (I.231). It is the way of seeing and perceiving the object that changes from moment to moment. Third, the fact that thought feels continuous within an individual’s consciousness implies that consciousness is a “stream” rather than being a series of disconnected bits (I.239). Furthermore, one important aspect of this continuous stream is that it is teleological: it *tends* toward a particular direction, “...having [for example] some topic or subject about which all the members of thought revolve” (I.259). Fourth, we believe that thought has to do with objects that have “independent” existence. The fifth aspect of consciousness is most relevant to James’s notion of will.

Consciousness “...*is always interested more in one part of its object than in another, and welcomes and rejects, or chooses, all the while it thinks.*” The similarity between this way of conceiving consciousness and the Edwardsean approach to volition is striking. Edwards equated will with the soul as welcoming or rejecting, choosing or refusing. “For the soul to act *voluntarily*, is evermore to act *electively*,” Edwards said. This fifth Jamesean aspect of consciousness from the Edwardsean standpoint *is* volition. To some extent, James thought of it the same way, conceiving of “the phenomena of selective attention and of deliberative will...” as “...patent *examples* of this choosing activity” (I.284; emphasis mine). But, whereas Edwards was more inclusive in terms of

what he included under the term “will,” James thought it best to limit the province of the will. The term “deliberative will,” which may well be a redundancy in Jamesian thought, illustrates this fact. Will’s function is to deliberate and choose among alternatives.

James thought that the ‘welcoming or rejecting’ aspect of consciousness was pervasive. Consciousness is “incessantly...at work” in this elective fashion, although it was contemporary practice to apply other labels to this elective function of consciousness.

“Accentuation and Emphasis are present in every perception we have. We find it quite impossible to disperse our attention impartially over a number of impressions” (I.284). Even more than emphasis and accentuation, the mind also necessarily *ignores* the majority of things available to its view. As he would explain in his chapter on the perception of reality, this selection and correlative ignoring of events was synonymous for what was important to the individual agent. In the Puritan mind, of course, it was the duty of humanity to make God most important. James’s “antinomian” approach to psychology simply emphasized the fact that we do emphasize certain things without actually stating *what* we should emphasize. Indeed, James was fascinated with the diversity of patterns of attention and interest among different individuals, and how these “habits of attention” actually defined reality for them:

Let four men make a tour in Europe. One will bring home only picturesque impressions - costumes and colors, parks and views and works of architecture, pictures and statues. To another all this will be non-existent; and distances and prices, populations and drainage-arrangements, door-and window-fastenings, and other useful statistics will take their place. A third will give a rich account of the theatres, restaurants, and public balls, and naught beside; whilst the fourth will

perhaps have been so wrapped in his own subjective broodings as to tell little more than a few names of places through which he passed. Each has selected, out of the same mass of presented objects, those which suited his private interest and has made his experience thereby. (I.286-287)

In Edwardsean thought, these habits of attention would have constituted a great part of the person's character and will. In James's "Arminian" scheme, habits and will are opposed.

James applied this elective aspect of consciousness to rationality, aesthetics, and ethics. His comments on ethics are most relevant to volition. In the realm of "Ethics...choice reigns notoriously supreme." The "ethical quality" of acts depends upon whether they are selected from several "equally possible" choices. James agrees with Upham here, but clearly contradicts Edwards on this point, who went to great lengths to show that moral goodness actually reduces the possibility of evil action. Yet this definition of ethical action was required for James's libertarian, indeterminist, intellectualist, and Victorian notion of free will: "To sustain the arguments for the good course and keep them ever before us, to stifle our longing for more flowery ways, to keep the foot unflinchingly on the arduous path, these are characteristic ethical energies" (I.287-288). The libertarianism and indeterminism here are found in the idea that two paths are equally plausible in ethical choice. The Intellectualist element (which will become more clear as we move through the Principles) is found in the idea that sustaining a representation (i.e., keeping good arguments "ever before us") is the key to action. Finally, the Victorian element here is found in the idea of resolute will-power, "...keepi[ng] the foot unflinchingly on the arduous path." James recapitulates some of his

statements in his chapter on habit in this chapter, saying that ethical choices determine what kind of character the chooser will take on. “What we shall *become* is fixed by the conduct of this moment” (I. 288). Yet what we become is something separate from the exercises of the Arminian faculty of choice.

In his summary of the chapter, James reiterates his indeterminist viewpoint. “Looking back, then, over this review, we see that the mind is at every stage a theatre of simultaneous possibilities” (I. 288). At this point, James speaks of consciousness in ways reminiscent of nineteenth century trichotomy: as an arbiter that stands apart from the possible routes of conduct. “Consciousness consists in the comparison of these [possibilities] with each other, the selection of some, and the suppression of the rest by the reinforcing and inhibiting agency of attention.” There is no fatality to this process. “The mind, in short, works on the data it receives very much as a sculptor works on his block of stone.” Although it is true that, “in a sense,” the sculpture “...stood there from eternity,” it is equally true that “...there were a thousand different ones beside it, and the sculptor *alone* is to thank for having extricated this one from the rest” (I.288). James’s language here strongly indicates a belief in a “sovereign,” Arminian, self-determining power of mind, and perhaps typifies the sentiment that Edwards was most solidly against: the desire for an entirely autonomous efficiency.

Although James does not address at this point the late-nineteenth century version of the Edwardsean argument against indeterminism (See Bain, 1880), one gets the sense that the overwhelming impossibility of predicting the specific course that a young soul would select from the seeming innumerable available possibilities was sufficient argument for indeterminism in James’s mind:

Just so the world of each of us, howsoever different our several views of it may be, all lay embedded in the primordial chaos of sensations, which gave the mere *matter* to the thought of all of us indifferently. We may, if we like, by our reasonings unwind things back to that black and jointless continuity of space and moving clouds of swarming atoms which science calls the only real world. But all the while the world *we* feel and live in will be that which our ancestors and we, by slowly cumulative strokes of choice, have extricated out of this, like sculptors, by simply rejecting certain portions of the given stuff. Other sculptors, other statues from the same stone! Other minds, other worlds from the same monotonous and inexpressive chaos! My world is but one in a million... (I.288-289)

The Self

When considered from the perspective of the loss of will in American psychology, perhaps the most interesting things about James's discussion of the self is how much of James's *self* overlaps with the *older* conception of will espoused by Calvinists like Ames and Edwards. Yet James thought of will as only a small part of the self, which is further evidence that the "Arminian" will was shrinking in the late nineteenth century.

Consistent with the American tradition, James began his discussion of the self by making recourse to introspection. As Coon (2000) has argued, James avoided metaphysical discussion concerning the reality of the soul by simply asserting that we are aware of a self, and so assuming the existence of a self is a reasonable thing to do. Indeed, it should be added that James frequently affirmed that psychology *must* start with

the data of consciousness, and that a failure to do so is equivalent to abandoning the subject matter of psychology. The self that is found through introspective analysis is “the empirical self.” He defines the empirical self broadly: “The Empirical Self of each of us is all that he is tempted to call by the name of *me*. But it is clear that between what a man calls *me* and what he simply calls *mine* the line is difficult to draw.” To illustrate this principle, he notes that certain apparently external things become incorporated into our identity. “*In its widest possible sense, however, a man’s Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account.*” Since these things become in some sense part of the self, the successes and failures associated with these things are felt personally: “If they wax and prosper, he feels triumphant; if they dwindle and die away, he feels cast down...” (I.291).

Given this broad understanding of the self, James then discussed the “constituents” of the self, which shows how closely James linked will to the notion of the self. The empirical self is divided into the material, the social, and the spiritual selves. The material self consists of body, clothes, family, home. “All these different things are the objects of instinctive preferences coupled with the most important practical interests of life. We all have a blind impulse to watch over our body, to deck it with clothing of an ornamental sort, to cherish parents, wife and babes, and to find for ourselves a home of our own which we may live in and ‘improve’” (I.292-293). This language reveals that James thought of the different kinds of selves in instinctive or impulsive terms. We have the “impulse” toward these things. Likewise, we possess “an equally instinctive

impulse...to collect property..." (I.293) that is part of the material self.

The "Social Self" (I.293) is driven toward "...the recognition which he gets from his mates," for we possess "...an innate propensity to get ourselves noticed, and noticed favorably, by our kind." Ever the pluralist, James argued that we possess "...as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize [us] and carry an image of [us] in their mind. To wound any one of these his images is to wound him" (I.294). The social self desires fame, honor and reputation. In the older, Edwardsean sense of the term, the material and social selves, being impulsive, would have been understood as having to do with will. Yet, as James's comments on instinct make clear, this too is an area that James removed from the dominion of will.

The "Spiritual Self" is less instinctual, and, in James's mind, more clearly related to will. Indeed, in the chapter on will, James portrayed the quintessential moral struggle as that between the desire for instinctual objects and the conflicting (and usually weaker) desire for more ideal objects. The spiritual self is "...a man's inner or subjective being, his psychic faculties or dispositions, taken concretely; not the bare principle of personal Unity, or 'pure' Ego, which remains still to be discussed." James seems to think of the spiritual self as the innermost person²⁶, the real person, "...the most enduring and intimate part of the self, that which we most verily seem to be." Moral judgment and conscience are parts of the spiritual self. The "indomitable will" is also part of the spiritual self (I. 296). Once again, it is clear that James's Arminian will is a subset of the Calvinistic will of Ames and Edwards. All impulses and desires would have been included in the

²⁶James was a bit inconsistent concerning what constituted the innermost self. He initially indicates that the spiritual self is innermost. In another passage, he indicates that the innermost self has to do with physiological "adjustments" which are distinct from the spiritual self (I. 302-305). In yet another passage, James refers to the social self as innermost (I. 316). It is not my intention here to work out these points of tension in James' theory of self, but rather to simply show that his theory of self was related to the will.

Amesian and Edwardsean conception of will, while James's will is the "indomitable" locus of human effort and striving.

In order to become aware of the spiritual self, one must abandon an outward way of considering the self, and to focus upon "...of subjectivity as such, *to think ourselves as thinkers*" (I. 296). James considered this ability to look within and to identify ourselves with the inner workings of consciousness "...a rather mysterious operation..." and chose to merely describe it, and leave the mystery open. (I.296).

Further evidence that James's spiritual self overlaps with other notions of will is found in his comment that "...it the *active* element in all consciousness...there is a spiritual something in him which seems to *go out...*" Utilizing language reminiscent of Edwards' broad definition of will, James asserted that the spiritual self "...is what welcomes or rejects. It presides over the perception of sensations, and by giving or withholding its assent it influences the movements they tend to arouse" (I. 297-298). But, moving away from a simple hedonic conception of volition, which Edwards favored, he thought of the spiritual self as "...the home of interest, - not the pleasant or the painful, not even pleasure or pain, as such, but that within us to which pleasure and pain, the pleasant and the painful, speak." In his chapter on will, James further clarifies that it is interest rather than pleasure which drives the will, and that pleasure and pain result from frustration or satisfaction of these interests. Additionally, James comments that the spiritual self "...is the source of effort and attention, and the place from which appear to emanate the fiat of the will." To avoid sounding too spiritualistic, James translates this antiquated language into more contemporary terms, "A physiologist who should reflect upon it in his own person could hardly help, I should think, connecting it more or less

vaguely with the process by which ideas or incoming sensations are ‘reflected’ or pass over into outward acts.” The physiological process by which ideas are translated into outward acts was a crucial aspect of volition for James. Much like the soul of old, the spiritual self is “a sort of junction at which sensory ideas terminate and from which motor ideas proceed, and forming a kind of link between the two.”

James argued that human beings experience a “central principle” that can be distinguished from “...the rest of what they call themselves...” (I. 298). Some people will call this central principle the soul, some will call it a myth, and “...between these extremes of opinion all sorts of intermediaries would be found.” James did discuss these various options, and, as I will argue below, his discussion is momentous for the psychology of will. But, since the empirical approach provided an ecumenical forum enabling discussion apart from metaphysical quagmire, James first focused upon the *experience* of this central principle or self. “...Let us try to settle for ourselves as definitely as we can, just how this central nucleus of the Self may *feel*, no matter whether it be a spiritual substance or only a delusive word” (I.298).

James’s discussion of this central part of the self should be taken as a discussion of the spiritual self. As quoted above, James thought the spiritual self is “...the most enduring and intimate part of the self, that which we most verily seem to be.” Although James did not think one could accurately describe the “precise nature” (I.298) of “the central part” of the Self, i.e., if it is the soul or some other metaphysical construction, he *was* certain that it could be felt. The spiritual self was not merely a cold and calculating intellect, but a sensible something. James’s introspections (and he admitted that they were merely *his* introspections, which reveals considerably more reticence in affirming

conscious experience as universal than Upham and the antebellum mental philosophers) revealed that the feeling of the spiritual self

James's consciousness was filled with the "...constant play of furtherance and hindrances in my thinking, of checks and releases, tendencies which run with desire, and tendencies which run the other way." This "palpitating inward" process was a spontaneous and reactive "...welcoming or opposing, appropriating or disowning, striving with or against, saying yes or no" (I.299). Again, this inward activity was, for Ames and Edwards, the activity of the will. For James it was not.

A crucial difference between Jamesean psychology and its theological/philosophical predecessors, was James's determination to link consciousness to biology. Highly attuned to links between mental and bodily sensations, James admitted in his chapter on emotion that he could not distinguish the emotion from the bodily states which accompany it. Similarly, James reported that "*...it is difficult for me to detect in the activity [of the central, spiritual self] any purely spiritual element at all. Whenever my introspective glance succeeds in turning round quickly enough to catch one of these manifestations of spontaneity in the act, all it can ever feel distinctly is some bodily process, for the most part taking place within the head*" (I.300). When thinking "in visual terms," James reported that he was aware of "feeling a fluctuating play of pressures, convergences, divergences, and accommodations in my eyeballs. The direction in which the object is conceived to lie determines the character of these movements, the feeling of which becomes, for my consciousness, identified with the manner in which I make myself ready to receive the visible thing" (I.300). James description of "making a mental effort," is revealing of the Arminian/Victorian experience of willpower:

In *effort* of any sort, contractions of the jaw-muscles and of those of respiration are added to those of the brow and glottis, and thus the feeling passes out of the head properly so called. It passes out of the head whenever the welcoming or rejecting of the object is *strongly* felt. Then a set of feelings pour in from many bodily parts, all 'expressive' of my emotion, and the head-feelings proper are swallowed up in this larger mass. (I.301)

James thus spoke with two minds concerning the spiritual self. In one breath he spoke in language reminiscent of the soul, the seat of conscience and moral effort. In the next breath, the inmost self is simply muscular strains and twitches. For the reductionists in his reading audience, James concluded that "*the 'Self of selves,' when carefully examined, is found to consist mainly of the collection of these peculiar motions in the head or between the head and throat*" (I.301). He thought that it was not unreasonable to believe that "*...our entire feeling of spiritual activity, or what commonly passes by that name, is really a feeling of bodily activities whose exact nature is by most men overlooked*" (I.301-302).

Although James offered his body-oriented notion of the central self in only tentative language, he did believe that the implications of such a viewpoint were worth considering. These considerations are again relevant to the topic of the will.

Just as James argued that emotion is really indistinguishable from the physiological states that constitute emotion, the central self could also "...be a collection of activities physiologically in no essential way different from the overt acts themselves" (I.302). James thought it possible to divide physiological events into "adjustments" and "executions," associating the central self with the adjustments, and the transitory

“shifting” self with the exertions. Although both adjustments and executions are reflexive, the adjustments are “constant,” incessantly repeated,” operate below the level of consciousness and are the doorway determining what will appear before consciousness. The constancy of the adjustments is related to the sense of continuity that the self possesses. The adjustments are also “primary reactions” of the relevant facial muscles to “everything,” and determine what objects will be admitted to consciousness and what will be excluded. James uses the language of approval and disapproval to describe this process, i.e., language historically associated with volitional processes:

It is as if all that visited the mind had to stand an entrance-examination, and just show its face so as to be either approved or sent back. These primary reactions are like the opening or the closing of the door. In the midst of psychic change they are the permanent core of turnings-towards and turnings-from, of yieldings and arrests, which naturally seem central and interior in comparison with the foreign matters, *apropos* to which they occur, and hold a sort of arbitrating, decisive position, quite unlike that held by any of the other constituents of the Me. It would not be surprising, then, if we were to feel them as the birthplace of conclusions and the starting point of acts, or if they came to appear as what we called a while back the ‘sanctuary within the citadel’ of our personal life. (I.302-303)

James concluded his discussion of the constituents of the self by arguing that the innermost self consists mainly in “...a collection of cephalic movements of ‘adjustments’ which, for want of attention and reflection, usually fail to be perceived and classed as what they are; that over and above these there is an obscurer feeling of something

more...” although this “something more” remained undefined (I.305).

Self-Seeking and Self-Preservation. Self-seeking and self-preservation “...cover a large number of our fundamental instinctive impulses,” and therefore also deal with territory associated with the older notion of the will. We have those of *bodily self-seeking*, those of *social self-seeking*, and those of *spiritual self-seeking*” (I.307). Bodily self-seeking would include impulses to make tools and hunt, for example, while social self-seeking drives us to please our friends and relatives, and to be associated with important people. Spiritual self-seeking encompasses traditionally religious themes. This self-seeking includes the desire to make some sort of “...psychic progress, whether intellectual, moral, or spiritual in the narrow sense of the term.” In the spirit of Puritanism, James makes clear distinctions between true spiritual self-seeking and the fear of punishment. “It must be admitted, however, that much that commonly passes for spiritual self-seeking in this narrow sense is only material and social self-seeking beyond the grave. In the Mohammedan desire for paradise and the Christian aspiration not to be damned in hell, the materiality of the goods sought is undisguised” (I.309). Given his portrayal of the fear of damnation as a “Christian aspiration,” James may not have realized that he was reiterating the Puritans consistent denunciation of such a fear as falling far short of the love of God that was to motivate the saint’s desire for heaven. Either way, James’s probing into the quality of spiritual motives is highly consistent with the indigenous tradition (and it may have reflected Henry Sr.’s theology as well). Interestingly, however, James’s seemed to criticize the Christian desire for fellowship with God as merely social, and thought of a self-oriented desire for purity to be true “...spiritual self-seeking pure and undefiled” (I.309).

What Self is Loved in 'Self-Love'? In a discussion that places James firmly within the indigenous theological and philosophical context, James took on the topic of self-love. A topic which Edwards, Upham, and his own father considered to be of the utmost spiritual importance. For Edwards, self-love was a given in the sense that human beings will always seek their happiness. The issue for Edwards had to do with which Object would be the source of that happiness. Upham discussed the topic. For Henry James Sr., self-love was more of an unequivocal evil. Henry Sr. frequently denounced self-love in front of his children, and even thought that belief in an independent self contributed to this evil (Menand, 2001, p. 85).

James may have been grappling with personal theological ghosts in this section of the Principles. He first explained the common way of thinking about self-love. "A man in whom self-seeking of any sort is largely developed is said to be selfish. He is on the other hand called unselfish if he shows consideration for the interest of other selves than his own" (I.317-318). James had, it seems been told to be on the "lookout" for self-love and to keep these impulses in check (I.319). James spent over 11 pages exploding this "proverbial philosophy" (I.319). Ironically, however, the "proverbial philosophy" which he imbibed was probably quite different than that of the indigenous tradition, because the answer he formulates is entirely consistent with the viewpoint of Ames, Edwards and Upham.

James's desire was to understand the nature of "the selfish emotion," and its "primary object." The emotion centers upon our innate concern for ourselves. We all feel this way. Although we remain indifferent to hear of the successes and failures of others, for example, we are never indifferent to our own: "*I must not be a failure, is the*

very loudest of the voices that clamor in each of our breasts: let fail who may, *I* at least must succeed” (I.318). James took this sentiment as universal, and concluded that self-concern animates us all. He related this phenomenon to an innate syllogism, the major premise always being “Whatever is me is precious...” Objects are seen as precious to the self to the extent that they are internalized as part of the self: “...this is me; therefore this is precious...” If an object fails to be internalized into the self, we remain indifferent or opposed to that object.

The objects that are involved in self-love are never the self or the soul or the ego (or whatever metaphysical term one may employ) *per se*. “To have a self that I can *care for*, nature must first present me with some *object* interesting enough to make me instinctively wish to appropriate it for its *own* sake, and out of it to manufacture one of those material, social, or spiritual selves...” We instinctively (as opposed to rationally) find strong interest in certain objects, and it is these objects that consciousness portrays as “the constituents of its Me.” This process is so basic that it sheds further light on the definition of the self. “*The words ME, then, and SELF, so far as they arouse feeling and connote emotional worth, are OBJECTIVE designations, meaning ALL THE THINGS which have the power to produce in a stream of consciousness excitement of a certain peculiar sort.*”

James takes the Augustinian and Puritan position that our loves define our selves. Consciousness, for example, typically experiences the body as part of the self because it *loves* the body. By way of contrast, and to refute the “proverbial” way of thinking about the matter, the body is not loved because it is somehow abstractly associated with the self. James thus demonstrates that the object of self-love is never the self. Each species

is equipped with certain loves, or instincts, and desire and interest flow from these inborn instincts. “Our *interest in things* means the attention and emotion which the thought of them will excite, and the actions which their presence will evoke.”

James illustrated the principle that the object of self-love is never the self in another way: “When I am led by self-love to keep my seat whilst ladies stand, or to grab something first and cut out my neighbor, what I really love is the comfortable seat, is the thing itself which I grab. I love them primarily, as the mother loves her babe, or a generous man an heroic deed.” As James does throughout the Principles, James saw this process as entirely necessary and deterministic. “Wherever, as here, self-seeking is the outcome of simple instinctive propensity, it is but a name for certain reflex acts. Something rivets my attention fatally, and fatally provokes the ‘selfish’ response.” Further, the more a person acts from this selfish principle, the less self-aware they become.

Neither is the self the object of “*social* self-love.” When we care deeply about the opinions of others, this concern is focused on “...a set of objects external to my thought,” i.e., the other person’s thoughts. Here, as always, objects of self love are “...*object[s]* of regard...” (I.321). Likewise, the object of spiritual self-love is external.

Interestingly, James thought that putting his doctrine into “zoological” and Darwinistic terms shed considerable light on the topic of self-love. All of the instinctual objects of material, social and spiritual self-love somehow facilitate the survival of the organism. James expressed his characteristic agnosticism concerning the sufficiency of the Darwinistic mechanism (I.324), which he summarized frequently as “the survival of the fittest,” but he did argue that “the primitive object” of interest is always related to

biological needs, and that other objects become incorporated into the self only as they are associated with these: “*My own body and what ministers to its needs are thus the primitive object, instinctively determined, of my egoistic interests. Other objects may become interesting derivatively through association with any of these things, either as means or as habitual concomitants; and so in a thousand ways the primitive sphere of the egoistic emotions may enlarge and change its boundaries.*”

In light of this “zoological” notion of self-love, it becomes clear that James’s Augustinian-sounding doctrine of self-love is not intended to revive Augustinianism or Edwardseanism. Rather, he is concerned to refute the “...the old-fashioned sensationalist psychology...” which taught that altruism necessarily contradicts human nature, and therefore must at some level be “hypocritical” exercises (I.325). The evolutionary viewpoint, James countered, shows that *any* object may be taken into the self and therefore become an object of *genuine* interest. Evolutionary thinking, James argued, actually makes belief in altruism possible. In addition to being consistent with Puritan ways of thinking, the belief that self-love could result in altruistic action may have also been a contradiction of his father’s own ruminations *against* the evils of self-love.

More importantly, the zoological notion of self-love also implied a radical shift of metaphors vis-à-vis the indigenous tradition. Despite the continuity of interest in the determinative role of “loves,” the metaphoric referent for these loves underwent a radical break with James. In Ames, Edwards, and Upham, American psychology posited God as the primary metaphor for human nature. God has will and intellect (or will, intellect and sensibility in Upham). God loves the good and hates evil. Human beings likewise have will and intellect, and may love and hate. In the comparative and zoological approach,

the metaphor switches. Animals have “loves” and “hates.” So too do human beings. Yet, since animals are not typically thought of as possessing will, James’s choice of metaphor may have, in hindsight, unintentionally put the very construct of will in jeopardy.

In sum, from the perspective of the indigenous tradition, James’s view on self-love recapitulated the old idea (expressed by Edwards and others): self-love is simply the love of one’s own happiness. James’s own manner of arguing this point was, of course, different than the traditional theological interpretations. The fact that James would think of self-love as being a process largely outside of the will further speaks to the narrowing of the concept in James’s thought.

The Soul. To close this analysis of James’s notion of self and its relation to volition, a quick look at James’s thought on the topic of soul is helpful. In the earliest stages of his analysis of the self, James held off the “metaphysical” questions concerning the nature of the self, choosing instead to focus discussion on the testimony of consciousness (i.e., on the “empirical self”). Later in the analysis, however, James did consider the “spiritualist theory,” the “Associationist theory,” and the “Transcendentalist theory.” Most germane to a comparison of James to the indigenous tradition, and to the issue of the loss of will, is James discussion of will, in which he concludes that the notion of soul is not needed for psychology. Since the topic of volition had up to this point *always* been linked to the soul, James’s confidence that construct is disposable was certainly a bold conjecture.

The theory of the soul, James explained, posits a simple, substantial, individual, and immaterial agent to lay behind conscious experience. Two main consequences flow

from this construct. First, the soul is incorruptible, so that none “...but God’s direct *fiat* can annihilate it...” Second, moral culpability is held in tact such that a soul may be held responsible “...for whatever it may have ever done” (I.344). Although an honorable list of philosophers had held to this theory, James still argued that the concept was not necessary in psychology.

James argued that many of the things typically associated with the soul (i.e., unity, identity, individuality and immateriality) were accounted for in his theory, as described above. In addition to these things, however, the theory of soul also cumbersomely posits another unchanging substance that lies behind the ever-changing flow of thought in consciousness. The cumbersome nature of this assumption is highlighted when considering the relation between thought and brain processes. The simplest way of thinking simply posits a correspondence between brain and thought. The Soul theory affirms the same thing, but in a clumsier way. “The spiritualistic formulation says that the brain-processes knock the thought, so to speak, out of a Soul which stands there to receive their influence. The simpler formulation says that the thought simply *comes*” (I.345). Although James thought that there may be something more than a simple correspondence between thought and brain²⁷, he did not think that positing a soul actually *explained* anything, and was therefore not needed for an empirical, scientific psychology.

James thought that other arguments do not help the cause, either. For example, “the argument from free-will...” which posited spontaneity to the soul as a foundation for freedom, “...can convince only those who believe in free-will...” (I.346). Telling,

²⁷Indeed, James was forthright about his beliefs in the matter: “For my own part I confess that the moment I become metaphysical and try to define the more, I find the notion of some sort of an *anima mundi* thinking in all of us to be a more promising hypothesis, in spite of all its difficulties, than that of a lot of absolutely individual souls” (I.346). In chapter 6, James also gave arguments in favor of a modified version of a soul theory.

however, is James' affirmation that "Thought" in and of itself may be said to have spontaneity as well. This must have comforted James: the thought that he could remain "empirical" and remain committed to libertarian freedom. Further undermining the necessity of positing a soul was the fact that all that can be posited of the soul is derived from mental experience. Plus, it is impossible to know how a "thing" such as soul could possibly have thoughts. James corroborated his assertion that we cannot know anything about the soul by arguing that not only Locke and Kant admitted ignorance, but also the leading lights of the "Scotch school" also generally admitted ignorance of the soul. In a rare quote of an American writer, James cites Wayland, who "...begins his Elements of Intellectual Philosophy with the phrase 'Of the essence of Mind we know nothing,' and goes on: 'All that we are able to affirm of it is that it is *something* which perceives, reflects, remembers, imagines, and wills; but what that something *is* which exerts these energies we know not. It is only as we are conscious of the action of these energies that we are conscious of the existence of mind'" (I.347). James noted that most members of the Scottish school argued in the same line, which is evidence that James had actually spent at least some time reading these authors.

Given the preceding argumentation, it is not surprising that James concluded that the soul theory is, at least on scientific grounds, "...a complete superfluity..." (I.348). Since the Principles purported to be a scientific textbook, one might imagine that James would be willing to leave the topic of soul alone at this point. Yet, aware of the fact that the implications of abandoning the concept of soul would have appeared to many of his readers to transcend scientific considerations, James attempted to show that the concept did not necessarily meet its intended obligations. For example, many may have thought

that the soul was necessary in order to safeguard the possibility for immortality. By way of contrast, the stream of consciousness is by nature transient and may at any moment cease. Despite this hesitation, James was not convinced that a substantial soul could “guarantee” the kind of eternal life that is typically desired, because it is not clear that a mere substance is capable of maintaining the stream of consciousness as we experience it in this life. This assertion is probably related to James’s identification of the stream with bodily sensation. Although the substantial soul would make divine retribution possible, James thought that moderns were “less insatiate for retribution...” (I.349) than their forebears, and could therefore on theological grounds dispose of the soul.

James concluded that the substantial soul “...explains nothing and guarantees nothing” (I.348). The only things we can *know* are the stream of thoughts available to consciousness. Given the superfluity of the concept, James felt “...entirely free to discard the word Soul from the rest of this book...” Nevertheless, he offered his readers the dubious and condescending assurance that they were free to believe in soul if that provided comfort to them. He also rejected the associationist view and the transcendentalist view of the ego.

James’s approach to the soul was done in the irenical spirit of American mental philosophy, attempting to create space for a variety of beliefs, while simultaneously demarcating the proper boundaries of science. Yet, also continuing in the tradition of American mental philosophy, James’s approach to the self as a secular replacement for the soul (Coon, 2000) can be considered part of the departicularizing and anti-dogmatic impulse in American thought. Once again, the question of sufficiency arises. Could the nonsectarian replacements of traditionally theological terms sustain the interests for

which they were designed? Just as the Jamesean will became more and more unsubstantial, so too did the Jamesean self lose its solidity. Although the will had always been considered a crucial faculty *of the soul* in American thought, James appeared to believe that he could retain certain faculties of the soul while rejecting the soul as a mere superfluity. Such picking and choosing failed to recognize the coherence and sustaining power of the system that James helped to dismantle. And, since James's psychology was intentionally anti-metaphysical, he could not offer an alternative theology or story to solidify his new arrangement.

James's brief theological comments illustrate this point in another way. James admitted that a substantial soul was a logical inference of a theology that posited divine judgment. That is, the notion of the soul presupposed certain dogmatic or metaphoric formulations. Surely this is true of all psychological constructs, including will. (Or *thumos*, or *nephesh*, or "working memory"). The method of introspection allowed James to retain those constructs which seemed most necessary or weighty, and to reject those which seemed extraneous. Removed from the thick description and communal embeddedness of its theological past, however, the concept of the will was sustained by nothing else than the conscious experience of William James and other New psychologists with similar intuitions. Just as soul did not weigh heavily upon the consciousness of William James, so too will would fail to weigh heavily on the consciousness of succeeding generations of American psychologists. By 1890, the concept of will was resting firmly on entirely subjective grounds.

Attention

James thought it interesting that the "English empiricist school," did not pay

much attention to the topic of selective attention, and attributed this to the school's insistence that the "higher faculties of the mind" are produced through experience, passively understood. James found the notion of mental passivity extraordinarily wrong-headed. At any given moment, James said, we are confronted with "millions of items" that *could* capture our fancy, but do not. This capturing of the fancy, or "interest" directs the mind to certain objects, and away from others. And the objects which one notices give shape to mind. Without this process of selective attention mental experience would be chaotic and paralyzing attempt to process millions of objects.

James appealed to the experience of his readers. "Every one knows what attention is. It is the taking possession by the mind, in clear and vivid form, of one out of what seem several simultaneously possible objects or trains of thought" (I.403-404). People can also relate to the opposite of attention, "...the confused, dazed, scatterbrained state which in French is called *distraction*, and *Zerstreuung* in German." This is the experience of staring off into space, which is usually accompanied by a heightened awareness of the entire body (as opposed to the head-centered experience of the attentive self). One can replicate this experience "...by fixing the eyes on vacancy."

When we emerge from this state the attention is said to have been awakened. At this moment, "one principal object comes then into the focus of consciousness, others are temporarily suppressed."

James addresses the question "how many things can we attend at once," which is not quite so relevant to his psychology will. The following discussion on "the varieties of attention," however, is quite relevant.

James made a distinction between kinds of attention vis-à-vis *the kinds of objects*

to which we attend. We pay attention to “objects of sense,” and so we have “sensorial attention,” and we pay attention to “Ideal or represented objects,” and so we have “intellectual attention.” James made a further distinction between kinds of attention based upon *teleological considerations*. When an object attracts our interest *per se*, attention is said to be “immediate.” When an object is interesting because it is linked to another immediately interesting object, attention is “derived.” James’s final distinction regarding attention had to do with the crucial distinction between what is voluntary and what is involuntary. His definition equates voluntary action with effortful action, which, as I have been arguing, is an aspect of the “loss” of will. Attention may be either “passive, reflex, non-voluntary, effortless...” or it may be effortful, “active and voluntary.”

In terms of the indigenous religious context, James’s definitions recall Edwards’ ruminations in his *Dissertation Concerning the End for which God Created the World*. Edwards began this treatise making a distinction “...between the *chief* end for which an agent performs any work, and the *ultimate* end.” He went on to describe that “an *ultimate* end is that which the agent seeks, in what he does, for its *own* sake; what he loves, values, and takes pleasure in on its own account, and not merely as a means of a further end.” He contrasted this with “a *subordinate* end...” which “...is what an agent aims at, not at all upon its own account, but wholly on the account of a *further* end, of which it is considered as a means.” “A *chief* end, which is opposite to an *inferior* end, is something diverse from an ultimate end; it is most valued, and therefore most sought after by the agent in what he does...” I am not claiming that James derived his categories from Edwards. Nor am I claiming that Edwards was original in his formulations. This is,

however, another example of the teleological and functional emphasis of American psychological thought which James inherited. Edwards' functionalism was *Augustinian*, employing the language of love (saying that the ultimate end of an agent's actions involve "what he loves, values, and takes pleasure in on its own account..."). James's functionalism not only employed the similar-sounding language of *interest*, but he also deliberately equated interest to love (see comments on self-love above). These consonances would seem to be further evidence that James partook, at least to some degree, of the "Augustinian strain of piety" (Miller, 1939).

After laying out these basic definitions, James noted that voluntary attention is never immediate, but is always derived, "...we never make an *effort* [i.e., a volition] to attend to an object except for the sake of some *remote* interest which the effort will serve." Given Edwards' comments, this is a curious caveat. Certainly Edwards thought that the chief Object of the Christian's attention is interesting *per se*, i.e., is an object of "immediate" attention, to use James's categories. Yet Edwards would have also considered God an object of voluntary attention, i.e., the Christian made an effort to focus upon this Object. Precisely what James accomplished by arguing that immediate and voluntary attention are necessarily opposed is an open question. He did, however, assert that "...both sensorial and intellectual attention may be either passive or voluntary" (I.416).

James explores the various permutations of attention. Passive immediate sensorial attention, i.e., effortless interest in an object of sense as an end in itself, has to do with "intense" or "sudden" stimuli, or else has to do with instinctual processes. This type of attention predominates in young people. Passive sensorial attention is not

immediate, i.e., is derived, an association is made between an otherwise uninteresting object and an interesting one. He gives the example of “a faint tap.” Ordinarily we pay little attention to faint taps, “but when it is a signal, as that of a lover on the window-pane, it will hardly go unperceived” (I.418).

Passive intellectual attention, i.e., effortless attention to objects of thought, occurs when the mind is carried along in the stream of thought concerning objects immediately or derivatively interesting. By way of example, “All revery or concentrated meditation is apt to throw us into this state” (I.419). James noted that effort is sometimes needed to “launch” oneself into such revery, indicating that voluntary intellectual attention often precedes passive intellectual attention.

James appealed again to his reader’s experience, utilizing vivid description to describe voluntary attention:

We get it in the sensorial sphere whenever we seek to catch an impression of extreme *faintness*, be it of sight, hearing, taste, smell, or touch; we get it whenever we seek to *discriminate* a sensation merged in a mass of others that are similar; we get it whenever we *resist the attractions* of more potent stimuli and keep our mind occupied with some object that is naturally unimpressive. We get it in the intellectual sphere under exactly similar conditions: as we strive to sharpen and make distinct an idea which we but vaguely seem to have; or painfully discriminate a shade of meaning from its similar... (I.420)

Voluntary attention applied to moral effort as well, being involved when we “...resolutely hold fast to a thought so discordant with our impulses that, if left unaided, it would quickly yield place to images of an exciting and impassioned kind.” James consistently

pitted instinctual impulses with ideal impulses. As will become clear when we turn to discuss James's chapter on will, James focuses upon holding fast to "a thought" because he believed thought was the springboard of all voluntary action. James pulled together these various forms of voluntary attention in a single humorous example:

All forms of attentive effort would be exercised at once by one whom we might suppose at a dinner-party resolutely to listen to a neighbor giving him insipid and unwelcome advice in a low voice, whilst all around the guests were loudly laughing and talking about exciting and interesting things. (I.420)

In sum, voluntary attention is effortful attention. Here, as elsewhere, James pairs the concepts of will and effort.

James also argued that voluntary attention can only be sustained for moments. To engage in prolonged periods of voluntary attention, the agent must continually bring back the desired topic of interest. Further, the view of the object must continually change and evolve in order to sustain attention. "*No one can possibly attend continuously to an object that does not change*" (p. 421). James here was speaking of an object psychologically considered, not as an "individual subject of existence" (I.275) which is something like the grammatical object of a sentence. James thought that the object psychologically considered includes all the circumstances, nuances, and other considerations the current perception. At first glance this argument, i.e., that we cannot continuously pay attention to an unchanging object, seems to contradict the Puritan/Amesian belief that God ought to be the ultimate Object of the believer's attention. The Puritans insisted that God did not change. So how would it be possible, in light of James's view, to attend to *the* Object? The answer, again, is that James thought

of objects *psychologically*. The Puritan could not maintain exactly the same thought of God in his mind for more than a few moments. But, by considering various aspects of the divine nature and divine works, the Puritan mind could, and did, keep his mind fixed upon the proper Object. I think James's principle here actually may to some extent *explain* the Puritan's prodigious and "prolix" theological output. They were sustaining their attention upon the Object by continually exploring the mysteries of the godhead. James's quote of Helmholtz illustrates this principle, "if we wish to keep it upon one and the same object, we must seek constantly to find out something new about the latter..." (I.422).

The issue of sustaining attention to morally significant matters was not only of interest to Puritans, either. James thought that "...the faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of judgment, character, and will. No one is *compos sui* if he have it not" (I.424). James therefore considered Helmholtz's insights into the relation between will and attention "of fundamental importance" (I.423). Helmholtz thought that the will exercises "mediate control" on attention by asking new questions of an object with which we would otherwise lose attention. The questions arouse interest and allow the object to remain fixed in consciousness. James summarized, "The *conditio sine qua non* of sustained attention to a given topic of thought is that we should roll it over and over incessantly and consider different aspects and relations of it in turn" (I.423). James concluded these mediations with a consideration of genius. Since geniuses naturally and automatically see greater nuance in any given object of attention, their attention is more easily sustained. Yet, since this ability is *involuntary*, this also means that genius hinders the development of

willpower: “...it is their genius making them attentive, not their attention making geniuses of them” (I.423). On the other hand, “...moderate intellectual endowments are the soil in which we may best expect, here as elsewhere, the virtues of the will, strictly so called, to thrive.” Here, as elsewhere, James seems to speak of will as if it were a muscle to be developed, and, given his own personal sense of a lack of willpower, perhaps James felt himself morally disadvantaged, and thereby excused, by his own genius. (That James thought himself a man of genius is probable, given his intoxicating but arrogant comparison of the “ordinary man” and the man of genius in his chapter on Reasoning, pp. 370-371).

James then focused upon the “effects of attention,” which are enormous and existentially overwhelming. “...Each of us literally *chooses*, by his ways of attending to things, what sort of a universe he shall appear to himself to inhabit.” When considered from a broad, phylogenetic perspective, the effects of attention are “incalculable.” “The practical and theoretical life of whole species, as well as of individual beings, results from the selection which the habitual direction of their attention involves” (I.424). More immediately, attention shapes perception, conception, comparison and discrimination and memory, each of which received a separate chapter treatment in the Principles. To use memory as an example of the role of attention in shaping the self, “...an object once attended to will remain in the memory, whilst one inattentively allowed to pass will leave no traces behind.” In other words, memory is entirely dependent upon attentional processes. The principle of attention, then, sheds light on James’s entire psychology, and should be kept front and center in any discussion of it. And, given that *will* is a crucial aspect of attention, either in its presence or absence, it figures more prominently in

James's thought than the single chapter on the topic would seem to indicate.

In addition, James also reviewed Wundt's experimental works on the effects of anticipation on reaction times, giving long quotations of the various permutations of experiments that showed that reaction times were shortened by particular kinds of preparation. He described the difference between sensorial and ideational adjustments, noticing that when objects of sense capture the attention, the body's organs are directed outwardly, but intellectual objects are associated with a turning inward of the bodily processes (e.g., our eyes are fixed straight ahead as we carefully read a book, but they may roll up as we take time to think about the point made). He also summarized the concept of "ideational preparation" (I.438), the way in which the imagination shapes and delimits our perceptual experience. "It is for this reason that men have no eyes but for those aspects of things which they have already been taught to discern" (I.443). James thought this concept was quite important in the psychic life: "In short, *the only things which we commonly see are those which we preperceive*, and the only things which we preperceive are those which have been labeled for us, and the labels stamped into our mind. If we lost our stock of labels we should be intellectually lost in the midst of the world" (I.444).

These phenomena raised a "speculative problem" (I.446) for James, to which he devoted a section in his chapter on Attention: "Is Voluntary Attention a Resultant or a Force." In this section, James once again raised the issue of freedom and determinism. James did not doubt that ideational preparation was crucial in shaping perceptual experience, but what, in any given moment, determined ideational preparation? James thought there were two possible answers to this "psychologic myster[y]": the brain or

“spiritual force” (I.447). Only the latter could satisfy and preserve the human spirit from despair:

When we reflect that the turnings of our attention form the nucleus of our inner self; when we see (as in the chapter on the Will we shall see) that volition is nothing but attention; when we believe that our autonomy in the midst of nature depends on our not being pure effect, but a cause...,-*Principium quoddam quod fati foedera rumpat, Ex infinito ne causam causa sequatur*-we must admit that the question whether attention involve such a principle of spiritual activity or not is metaphysical as well as psychological, and is well worthy of all the pains we can bestow on its solution. It is in fact the pivotal question of metaphysics, the very hinge on which our picture of the world shall swing from materialism, fatalism, monism, towards spiritualism, freedom, pluralism, - or else the other way. (I.447-448)

This quote expresses the “Arminian” sentiment that Edwards’ Calvinistic conscience found most troubling: the desire for a “sovereign” will. In the Calvinistic scheme, all efficiency was God’s efficiency. Human volition was a gift of efficiency from the Creator. The motivation to posit a self-determined will, Edwards seemed to suspect, was a desire to have an efficiency of one’s own. To be god. This, I think, is the sentiment that James expresses here. The desire to possess “autonomy” and to be “a cause.” Certainly James was under no delusions about having an omnipotent will. He was acutely aware of human limitation. Yet he hoped to offer something uniquely his own. Something totally underived, totally uncaused. The *only* alternative to this secular Arminianism in James’s mind was “materialism, fatalism, monism.” Calvinism, of

course, could never be an option.

James recalled his previous discussion of the automaton theory and the causal efficacy of consciousness. Feeling may simply be “an inert accompaniment...” of attention and volition, “...the fatally predetermined *effect* of exclusively material laws.” The feeling could be a cause, however, if it “...reacts dynamically upon that activity, furthering or checking it...” But, James qualified, the causal efficacy of feeling does not *require* indeterminism, it simply rules out *material* (as opposed to mental) determinism. Although James would in other places openly advocate indeterminism, he left the issue open here. He clearly seemed to think that a psychological determinism was much to be preferred to a neurological one.

Once again, James concluded that one’s final opinion on the matter is a matter of personal metaphysical preference, “The question is of course a purely speculative one, for we have no means of objectively ascertaining whether our feelings react on our nerve-processes or not...whoever affirms either conception to be true must do so on metaphysical or universal rather than on scientific or particular grounds” (I. 448).

James freely admitted that certain types of attention operated upon purely deterministic principles (just as he thought four of five different “types of decision” did so too, see chapter 12). James thought human mind is so structured that immediate sensorial attention happens automatically. In this case, objects simply draw the attention without choice. Derived attention operates by similar mechanisms. Even voluntary attention *per se* is “...an effect, and not a cause, a product and not an agent” (I.450), because it does not actually produce ideas: “The things we attend to *come to us* by their own laws. Attention *creates* no idea; an idea must already be there before we can attend

to it” (I.450). But when an idea is brought before consciousness, attention may either grab hold of (or “fix and retain”) it, or let it go. Usually, this voluntary fixing and retaining of an idea in consciousness is *determined* by the interest which accompanies a particular idea. Indeterminism creeps in when the agent attends to an “...intrinsically very unwelcome...” idea through effort. Since these intrinsically unwelcome ideas are often the most morally important ideas, the role of indeterminism was quite significant. Since the attention cannot be said to be determined by the intrinsic interest that occasions the idea, it must therefore be the effort of the agent that determines and fixes the attention. Like Upham (and like Ward- see Bain, 1880) and many libertarians before him, James thereby utilized introspective evidence that seemed to contradict the idea that the strongest motive determines action, and suggested that the human agent may possess an intrinsic spontaneity of will:

In fact it is only to the *effort to attend*, not to the mere *attending*, that we are seriously tempted to ascribe spontaneous power. We think we can make more of it *if we will*; and the amount which we make does not seem a fixed function of the ideas themselves, as it would necessarily have to be if our effort were an effect and not a spiritual force. (I.451)

James continues in this vein:

Effort is felt only where there is a conflict of interests in the mind. The idea A may be intrinsically exciting to us. The idea Z may derive its interest from association with some remoter good. A may be our sweetheart, Z may be some condition of our soul’s salvation. Under these circumstances, if we succeed in attending to Z at all it is always with expenditure of effort. The ‘ideational

preparation,' [sic] the 'preperception' of A keeps going on of its own accord, whilst that of Z need incessant pulses of voluntary reinforcement - that is, we have the *feeling* of voluntary reinforcement (or effort) at each successive moment in which the thought of Z flares brightly up in our mind. (I.451)

Well aware of the deterministic refutation of this line of reasoning, James added the cautious caveat: "But even here [in the case of apparent self-determination of effort] it is possible to conceive the facts mechanically and to regard the effort as a mere effect" (I.451). In this case, "Z" or the purportedly weaker motive (to use Edward's language) only appears to introspection to be weaker (and James, like the libertarians before him, was convinced that, in cases of effort, the *weaker* motive really prevailed. Determinists like Edwards had no such experience). At a physiological level, however, it is actually *stronger*. The feeling of effort occurs when the mind is forced to deal with another motive of comparable, but lesser, strength. At the level of brain physiology, some of the force of the "associative processes" associated with Z are channeled into inhibiting and neutralizing the "brain-energy" connected to the weaker motive, A. This process of inhibition is translated into the feeling of effort.

James compared this neurological process to a stream. Ordinarily, our voluntary consciousness flows like a stream, effortlessly grasping onto objects that interest us the most. Sometimes the smooth flow of the stream is disturbed with rocks. The water then swirls around these hindrances. According to the determinists, James argued, the feeling of effort is an effect of these swirls. Yet, the feeling of effort remains only an effect: the direction of the water remains inevitable. If this is the case, then the feeling of effort or of conscious will may end up being an illusion (see Wegner, 2002, for a modern-day re-

statement of this argument):

The feeling of effort may be ‘an accompaniment,’ as Mr. Bradley says,’ more or less superfluous,’ and no more contribute to the result than the pain in a man’s finger, when a hammer falls on it, contributes to the hammer’s weight. Thus the notion that our effort in attending is an original faculty, a force additional to the others of which brain and mind are the seat, may be an abject superstition.

Attention may have to go, like many a faculty once deemed essential, like many a verbal phantom, like many an idol of the tribe. It may be an excrescence on Psychology. No need of it to drag ideas before consciousness or fix them, when we see how perfectly they drag and fix each other there. (I.452)

Needless to say, James did not agree with this way of thinking, and levied a moral criticism against it. “We *may*,” James argued, “then regard attention as a superfluity, or a ‘Luxus,’ and dogmatize against its causal function with no feeling in our hearts but one of pride that we are applying Occam’s razor to an entity that has multiplied itself ‘beyond necessity.’” (I.452-453). The desire to dogmatize all-encompassing views of the universe was a function of human need. These systems were *not*, however, necessarily true. Further, as he would articulate in his *Dilemma of Determinism*, they were (like the Calvinism his father rejected) morally repugnant ways of considering the universe. A good and gracious universe is an antinomian universe, a universe which refuses to exalt any law, including physical law, above the freedom of moral agents; which is really just a step away from Upham’s universe in which God will not and can not violate the free will of his creation. Indeed, the laws of nature may very well submit themselves to the laws of human spontaneity and freedom:

The laws of stimulation and of association may well be indispensable actors in all attention's performances, and may even be a good enough 'stock-company' to carry on many performances without aid; and yet they *may* at times simply form the background for a 'star-performer,' who is no more their 'inert accompaniment' or their 'incidental product' than Hamlet is Horatio's and Ophelia's. Such a star-performer would be the voluntary effort to attend, if it were an original psychic force. Nature *may*, I say, indulge in these complications; and the conception that she has done so in this case is, I think, just as clear (if not as 'parsimonious' logically) as the conception that she has not. (I.453).

James also approached this issue pragmatically. If we were to grant that human beings possess a degree of spontaneity, what would this spontaneity effect? For one, it would allow the agent to retain in consciousness the morally consequential ideas that would otherwise fall prey to their invisibility among the enumerable ideas which pass through consciousness and the paucity of interest which they naturally elicit. It is in this sphere of overwhelming uncertainty that the faculty of effort operates, clinging for a moment to one idea rather than another, and in the process sealing the "doom" of the agent. James referred his readers to the chapter on will, in which he promised to argue that, "...the whole drama of the voluntary life hinges on the amount of attention, slightly more or slightly less, which rival motor ideas may receive" (I.454).

James's struggle to articulate a libertarian notion of free will for a scientific age reflects the profound anxieties of a post-Arminian secular culture which had grown accustomed to think of moral action in libertarian terms. For James, libertarianism meant indeterminism which, in turn, meant antinomianism. No laws of the universe could

trump the laws of human freedom. But James's antinomian universe, which threw all responsibility onto the shoulders of the agent, was a profoundly unforgiving universe. The choice to attend to one idea over another for even a few moments could seal the "doom" of the agent, and could never be undone. This is the same fatalism that James expresses in his chapter on habit: once plasticity is lost, the person *cannot* change. For James, freedom exists in the moment (I.453) and, once the possibilities of the moment have passed, is forever and unforgivingly lost. Surely, other morally decisive moments may arise, but the moral failures of the past make these increasingly rare and increasingly difficult to embrace.

Like the existentialists that would follow him, free will was thus a burdensome reality. This burdensomeness can be detected in the following passage: "But the whole feeling of reality, the whole sting and excitement of our voluntary life, depends on our sense that in it things are *really being decided* from one moment to another, and that it is not the dull rattling off of a chain that was forged innumerable ages ago." The feeling that we are actually deciding things "...makes life and history tingle with such a tragic zest..." The sting and zest of human freedom is simultaneously and necessarily tragic. This way of thinking about the universe contrasted strongly with that of Edwards, who not only thought all events to be predetermined, but also believed the Universe to be on his side. The "chain that was forged innumerable ages ago" was anything but "dull" to Edwards. It was a source of hopeful expectation and a sense that a Being greater than himself buoyed his consciousness above the realities of sin and misery in this life.

James again relegated the issue to metaphysics and insisted that the issue could not be resolved on logical grounds. The intuitions of the libertarian, or the determinist,

(or the Arminian or the Calvinist), do not and cannot derive from a dispassionate consideration of the evidence— for the evidence is simply nonexistent. The feeling of effort “...*may* not be an illusion.” Even the determinist must admit that this is the case. James took comfort in the impasse, “...the result is two conceptions of possibility face to face with no facts definitely enough known to stand as arbiter between them.” Since evidence cannot arbitrate, the psychologist has two options, first, to remain agnostic until science conclusively resolves the issue, or, second, to allow “...one’s general philosophy to incline the beam.” Since the determinists certainly allowed their worldview to “incline the beam,” James simply asked for right to do the same.

Association

James began his chapter on association reiterating the point he made in the preceding chapter on discrimination: that synthesis and analysis are both crucial psychological processes. “It is obvious that the advance of our knowledge *must* consist of both operations; for objects at first appearing as wholes are analyzed into parts, and objects appearing separately are brought together and appear as new compound wholes to the mind. Analysis and synthesis are thus the incessantly alternating mental activities, a stroke of the one preparing the way for a stroke of the other, much as, in walking, a man’s two legs are alternately brought into use, both being indispensable for any orderly advance.” So, after having offered his explanation of discrimination, he gave his account of syntheses, or of “the association of ideas.”

The phenomenon that the associationists desired to explain, i.e., the way thoughts are spontaneously connected to each other in consciousness, was an obvious and important empirical *given* to James. He was impressed by the mysteriousness of these

mental connections, and seemed somewhat ambivalent about the way attempts to explicate the rules of mental association had actually served “...to banish something of the mystery...”

The rules of association did not attempt to explain the manifold connections between objects that can be conceived. These connections (such as “coexistence, succession, resemblance, contrast, contradiction, cause and effect, means and end, genus, and species, part and whole...., etc; I.551) are innumerable and have more to do with logic than psychology. James, and the associationists were concerned not with cataloguing all of the ways a human mind can conceive of connections between objects. Rather, as psychologists, they desired to understand the basic laws that describe the way the mind makes connections between thoughts. To put the issue differently, “*there are...mechanical conditions on which thought depends, and which, to say the least, determine the order in which is presented the content or material for her comparisons, selections, and decisions*” (I.553). By explicating the mechanics of thought, James was entering into potentially uneasy territory. As we have seen (and we shall see), James’s theory of free will depended a great deal upon freedom of thought. It is not surprising, then, that immediately after explicating the mechanics of spontaneous thought in this chapter, he immediately tried to carve out some space for free thought.

James reiterated his criticism of the notion of simple ideas. “...The whole historic doctrine of psychological association is tainted with one huge error—that of the construction of our thoughts out of the compounding of themselves together of immutable and incessantly recurring ‘simple ideas.’” (I.553). The basic “principles of association,” building upon this error, purported to explain the ways simple ideas

combine into wholes. Despite the erroneous first principles of orthodox associationist psychology, James still thought associationist insights were a fundamental part of human psychology. His chapter is a kind of functional re-interpretation of associationist principles.

Given the falsity of the doctrine of simple ideas, the first re-conceptualization that James offered concerned precisely *what* was associated. James had previously made the point that consciousness experience is object-centered, rather than idea-centered. Indeed, psychologically speaking, “simple ideas” were simply an unreal abstraction. Therefore, “we ought to talk of the association of *objects*, not of the association of *ideas*.” And, in order to move beyond mere description to explanation, i.e., to think of association as a cause, James thought of association as occurring between brain processes.

James laid out “a few familiar facts” of association. For one, “the laws of motor habit in the lower centres of the nervous system...” (I.554) produce associative effects, and impressions from different senses may be associated just as easily as impressions from the same sense. He also addresses “the rapidity of association.”

With his object-centered approach to association in place, James defined the law of contiguity: “*objects once experienced together tend to become associated in the imagination, so that when any one of them is thought of, the others are likely to be thought of also, in the same order of sequence or coexistence as before*” (I.561). He related this psychological law to physiological laws of habit, and claimed that Descartes, Locke and Hartley, who had made similar physiological arguments, to be his intellectual predecessor in this matter.

The law of contiguity is of only limited helpfulness, however, because it does not

explain precisely *which* associated object will be brought into consciousness upon consideration of another object. Most objects that are held in consciousness are associated with *many* objects. How does the mind select among the many possible associated objects? Although the associationists had attempted to derive other laws of association to fill in the gaps, James insisted, upon consideration of his knowledge of the brain, that there are no such laws. Only “the law of neural habit” (I.566) was effectual in associative processes. The other laws of association are simply *post hoc* explanations that depend upon the result of these neural mechanisms. On the face of it, this conclusion leaves association largely a mystery— which is precisely what an indeterminist wants.

James re-stated the problem in terms of brain physiology. “Let us then assume as the *basis* of all our subsequent reasoning this law: *When two elementary brain-processes have been active together or in immediate succession, one of them, on reoccurring, tends to propagate its excitement into the other*” (I.566). Although this principle is elegant, it oversimplifies the realities of association. Any given elementary brain-process has been associated with *many* other brain-process. The problem is: how is only one particular process activated when many are possible? James’s answer was relatively straightforward and mechanical. If the excitement of one brain process is insufficient to bring a particular object to consciousness, other brain-processes associated with this object (but not with the other possible objects) also need to be present.

James was content to remain mechanistic with “...spontaneous trains of thought and ideation, such as occur in revery or musing.” He thought, however, that “...the case of voluntary thinking toward a certain end...” was a different story, as is discussed below.

James noted that association does not usually involve “impartial redintegration,”

or the “complete reproduction of all the items of a past experience” (I.571). Rather, particular facets of past experience are ordinarily brought into consciousness during association. To explain what precisely determines which facets are brought into consciousness, James turned to one of his favorite concepts, *interest*. The items which are associated are “...*those which appeal most to our INTEREST*” (I.572). Since interest is the determinative factor, it is only when we find all things equally interesting that we may actually experience impartial redintegration. James challenged his readers to inspect their own trains of thought to see that this was the case.

This still left open the question regarding the precise content of an association. What determined which elements of a recalled object would determine the subsequent objects in the chain of association? The mere principle of habit could only explain so much, because an object of thought does not always elicit thoughts of the same object. James thought that other principles could fill in the gaps—to some extent. Recency of association, vividness of original experience, and emotional congruity also determine which representation is elicited rather than another.

Despite the *basic* predictability of these chains of thought, James, not surprisingly, called attention to the impossibility of perfectly predicting *any* chain. Although it is possible in hindsight to see *how* the particular objects in a chain were associated with one another, it is really impossible to know beforehand precisely *which* objects will emerge in the chain. Sometimes objects that seem less vivid, less recent, less congruent are remembered. James resisted the temptation to simply postulate indeterminism at this point, however. Instead, sticking to his naturalistic guns, he deterministically argued that the chain is “no doubt...determined by cerebral causes,

[which are] too subtle and shifting for our analysis” (I.577). Indeed, he went so far as to argue that “...the order of *presentation of the mind’s materials* is due to cerebral physiology alone” (I.593). But herein lay the foundations of the indeterminism of the system. The presentation of objects to consciousness is fatally determined. The selection of objects is not.

James, defending the great American tradition of indeterminism regarding acts of will, was, therefore, not content to allow determinism to reign freely over the entire mind. The preceding analysis applied only to “spontaneous” thought. As a human being allows thought to flow with out the deliberate intervention of will, the deterministic laws of association and habit will fatally determine the exact content of thought. Actions, which are always linked to thought, will therefore also fatally follow the thought. But James argued that there was another path to action, which, in some limited cases, trumped the laws of association and habit. This path had to do with “distinct purpose or conscious interest” (I.583).

When a person engages in such deliberate activity, a “modification” is made in the chain of association. This modification was, like spontaneous mental activity, rooted in the brain. When a given train of thought is characterized by purpose, this purpose is, physiologically speaking, “...the persistent activity of certain rather definite brain-processes throughout the whole course of thought” (I.583). This purpose-driven cognition is actually the *typical* mental activity. “Our most usual cogitations are not pure reveries, absolute driftings, but revolve about some central interest or topic to which most of the images are relevant, and towards which we return promptly after occasional digressions.” This is of course fully consistent with the thoroughgoing teleology of

James's psychology. James illustrated the crucial role of purpose in human thought in a number of ways. Returning, for example, to the question of *which* aspect of an object of thought will activate the next object in the train, James argued that purpose looms large in this determination. "If, for instance, I think of Paris whilst I am *hungry*, I shall not improbably find that its *restaurants* have become the pivot of my thought, etc., etc." (I.384). Purposive thinking is also evident in problem solving (i.e., when the means to an end are not clear), and in the desire to recall a specific piece of forgotten information. James thought these processes to be linked to feeling: the desire to remember the forgotten item is manifested as "an *aching* void" which impels the thinker toward the missing information.

Most relevant, James thought that these mental activities were related to the will, and, by implication, indeterminist principles. When we attempt to recall a specific bit of information, the will "hover[s]" over consciousness, looking for the object of its desire. As it hovers, a non-volitional process occurs, bringing various associations and memories into consciousness. As the will follows those memories which seem closest to the goal, a sense of "that we are 'warm'" is sensed. When the desired object is finally recalled, the tension and longing vanish and "the mind finds an inexpressible relief" (I.586). Although the process of association is inextricably physiological and deterministic, the ability of the mind to "hover," to attend *certain* elements of the stream and ignore others, was for James the domain of freedom. A theme to which James frequently returned was the causal efficacy of consciousness. If "will" was to make any sense to James (and the Arminian mental philosophers before him), it would have to have some power over and above the normal flow of automaticity and determination. The following paragraph

summarizes the basic issues so well that it should be quoted in full:

The *effects of interested attention and volition* remain. These activities seem to hold fast to certain elements, and by emphasizing them and dwelling on them, to make their associates the only ones which are evoked. *This* is the point at which an anti-mechanical psychology must, if anywhere, make it stand in dealing with association. Everything else is pretty certainly due to cerebral laws. My own opinion on the question of active attention and spiritual spontaneity is expressed elsewhere. But even though there be a mental spontaneity, it can certainly not create ideas or summon them *ex abrupto*. Its power is limited to *selecting* amongst those which the associative machinery has already introduced or tends to introduce. If it can emphasize, reinforce, or protract for a second either one of these, it can do all that the most eager advocate of free will need demand; for it then decides the direction of the next associations by making them hinge upon the emphasized term; and determining in this wise the course of the man's thinking, it also determines his acts. (I.594)

The Perception of Reality

Belief

James begins his chapter on "the perception of reality" characteristically, with an appeal to experience: "EVERYONE knows the difference between imagining a thing and believing in its existence, between supposing a proposition and acquiescing in its truth" (II.283). Like Ames and Edwards, James is careful to make a distinction between mere supposition and faith. Unlike Ames, however, who thought of faith as trust and reliance upon an object, James thought belief had more to do with the perception of reality. "In

the case of acquiescence or belief, the object is not only apprehended by the mind, but is held to have reality. Belief is thus the mental state or function of cognizing reality” (I.283).²⁸

Again consistent with Ames and Edwards, James locates belief (to use the antiquated language of faculty psychology) in the will rather than the intellect. As the American Puritans tended to think of the affections as belonging to the will, James associated belief with affect: “*In its inner nature, belief or the sense of reality, is a sort of feeling more allied to the emotions than anything else.*” He further associated this affective element with the will: “It resembles more than anything what in the psychology of volition we know as consent. Consent is recognized by all to be a manifestation of our active nature. It would naturally be described by such terms as ‘willingness’ or the ‘turning of our disposition.’” Just as faith in Puritan psychology led to peace of mind and composure, James thought belief was accompanied by “...the cessation of theoretic agitation, though the advent of an idea which is inwardly stable, and fills the mind solidly to the exclusion of contradictory ideas” (II.282). Unbelief is of the same sort of phenomenon, accompanied by a lack of agitation, for the unbeliever is just as settled as the believer. In light of the similarities between belief and unbelief, James therefore thought that the opposite of belief, psychologically considered, is not unbelief. Rather, the opposite of belief would include a lack of the settledness of belief. It would include agitation. Therefore, the opposite of belief is doubt and inquisitiveness. A mind still unsure of what is true is a mind lacking peace. (James is here relying on introspection). The connection between the Puritan and the Jamesean view of belief becomes a bit clearer in this light. For Ames, belief was a resting of the soul a trust, a “lack of

²⁸ Recall that Upham had briefly spoken of belief in similar terms, Upham, 1869, I.178.

agitation” concerning the trustworthiness of God. Further, just as Ames insisted that a human heart will believe in something, be it God, or “wisdom, power, friends, and their own riches” (Ames, 1968, I.iii.13) and, correspondingly, a belief in power or riches makes faith in God impossible, James too saw belief and unbelief in similar terms. “But we shall presently see that we never disbelieve anything except for the reason that we believe something else which contradicts the first thing” (James, 1890, II.284).

Another similarity between James and the American Puritan tradition is the link between belief and action. Like the writer of the biblical book of James, the American Puritans were strongly convinced that faith without works is no faith at all. William James, utilizing the logic of physiology rather than scripture, thought that action tended to follow belief as well. Yet, since James had a physiological point of view, he had a broader view of what constitutes action. For James, the mere twitching of a muscle was action, whereas the Puritans were more concerned with full outward acts of obedience.

The extent to which James found human belief and unbelief to be independent of cool, rational considerations, is found in the experimental materials that he selected to illustrate these principles. Both the quiet of belief and the tumult of inquiry may be “pathologically exalted.” In the case of drunkenness, belief is strengthened considerably through “...the deepening of the sense of reality and truth which is gained therein” (II.284). “Nitrous oxide intoxication” carries this principle “to a fully unutterable extreme...in which a man’s very soul will sweat with conviction, and he be all the while unable to tell what he is convinced of at all.” Doubt also has its pathological forms, such as “...the questioning mania,” which “...consists in the inability to rest in any conception, and the need of having it confirmed and explained ‘Why do I stand here where I stand ?’

‘Why is a glass a glass, a chair a chair’ ‘How is it that men are only of the size they are? Why not as big as houses,’ etc., etc.” (II.284). He also discussed cases in which nothing seems real at all. By laying out these extremes, and showing how they were related to physiological conditions, James was undermining the rationality of belief. Conviction is an emotional matter which has very little to do with the objective consideration of evidence. If James was an intellectualist, he was certainly one very different than Upham, who seemed rather convinced that human beings have the capacity to be objective in their reasoning.

Although I am arguing for a continuity between James’s psychology of belief and the indigenous Puritan psychology of will, it is clear that James did not cite William Ames or Jonathan Edwards to support these notions. As was the case particularly with Upham, James also borrowed explicitly from modern, *European* authors, who made much the same point, but without sectarian language. James approvingly cited John Stewart Mill, who argued that it is impossible to give an account for the distinction between holding a mere proposition in the mind and *believing* that proposition is true. More to the point, James cited Brentano, who argued that every object which enters into consciousness does so in two ways. First, each object of consciousness is simply an object of thought. Second, this object is either accepted and embraced, or rejected. James thought that certain elements characterize cases of belief and doubt. In both cases there is a proposition consisting of subject, a predicate, and the relation between the two. Yet, any given proposition may be believed *or* doubted, and, in either case, the content of the proposition does not change, i.e., it is the *same* proposition in both cases. What changes is “the psychic attitude” (II.287) with which the proposition is carried.

Given the existence of human belief thus defined, and the difficulty of explaining its nature in consciousness, James then turned to the question regarding the conditions of belief. *When* does belief occur?

The Various Orders of Reality. James argued that a primitive or “new-born mind” is not capable of doubt. A mind such as this, “...entirely blank and waiting for experience to begin,” is engrossed by the first sensations it encounters. If the new-born mind encounters “a lighted candle against a dark background, and nothing else,” then that candle “...constitutes the entire universe known to the mind in question.” Even if the candle is imaginary, the naive mind will not know the difference. For this mind, “That candle is its all, its absolute. Its entire faculty of attention is absorbed by it. It *is*, it is *that*; it is *there*; no other possible candle, or quality of this candle, no other possible place, or possible object in the place, no alternative, in short, suggests itself as even conceivable.” In this case, “...how can the mind help believing the candle real?” It is impossible that it could do anything else but believe that the candle which fills its conscious experience is real. It has no frame of reference to contradict the experience. (II.286). He cites Spinoza to this effect. So, just as belief can only be eradicated by belief in a contradictory proposition, so too “...the sense that anything we think of is unreal can only come, then, when that thing is contradicted by some other thing of which we think. Any object which remains uncontradicted is ipso facto believed and posited as absolute reality. (II.288-289).

After spending some time discussing the ways in which contradictory propositions come to be held by the mind, he addresses the weighty moral issue concerning *which* of the contradictory ways of thinking is accompanied by the attitude of

belief, i.e., which proposition is considered real. His answer is starkly indeterminist and even “Arminian:” belief is simply a matter of choice. “...we must choose which way to stand by...” James also seems to assert that humans have the ability to choose among contradictory propositions: “...*we can choose which way of thinking to adhere to and which to disregard*” (II.290). By choosing to “adhere” to a given object, that object becomes real:

The subjects adhered to become real subjects, the attributes adhered to real attributes, the existence adhered to real existence; whilst the subjects disregarded become imaginary subjects, the attributes disregarded erroneous attributes, and the existence disregarded an existence into men’s land, in the limbo ‘where footless fancies dwell.’ (II.290-291)

In other words, psychologically speaking, *reality* is predicated of objects of belief, while non-reality is predicated of objects of nonbelief.

When contrasted with the preceding voluntarist exposition (i.e., that belief and therefore will are a matter of affect), James’s explanation of *how* the mind selects one reality over another is quite abrupt and seemingly inconsistent. One might have expected him to say that belief is determined by those irrational processes that ordinarily accompany belief. That is, *some* objects are inexplicably connected with the “sting” of reality while others are not. James departs from his voluntarist psychology here, and echoes the Arminian psychology of Upham and the American mental philosophy tradition. One believes in one object over another simply because one chooses to believe. James’s explication of the “faculty of effort” similarly manifests this indeterminist formulation.

The human mind does not perceive only one unified reality, but cognizes a plurality of (typically) disconnected “sub-universes” which are thought to have existence. James listed seven sub-universes which are “...commonly discriminated from each other and recognized by most of us as existing, each with its own special and separate style of existence...” These are “the world of sense, or of physical ‘things’,” “the world of science, or of physical things...,” “the world of ideal relations, or abstract truths believed or believable by all...,” “the world of ‘idols of the tribe,’ illusions or prejudices common to the race,” “the various supernatural worlds, the Christian heaven and hell, the world of the Hindoo mythology, the world of Swedenborg’s *visa et audita*, etc.,” “the various worlds of individual opinion, as numerous as men are,” and “the worlds of sheer madness and vagary, also indefinitely numerous” (II.292-293).

We automatically refer or categorize our objects of thought as belonging to one of these worlds, and tend to be consistent in the way we designate them. Any given object of thought “...settles into...” the belief that it is a scientific object, or an object of sense, for example. Although the typical mind does not seek to understand the connections between these worlds, each mind believes the object of thought and its corresponding “world” to be “...real after its own fashion,” as long as one pays attention to it. “The reality lapses with the attention” (II.293).

In addition to these typical patterns of categorization (by which objects of attention are referred to particular sub-universes), human minds also typically have patterns of meta-perception. In other words, in the individual mind, one or two of the aforementioned sub-universes becomes “*the world of ultimate realities*” (II.293). Objects of thought which fit into this world are perceived as being real, objects which do

not fit are seen as unreal. James thought that for most people the world of sense was ultimate. For the “special man” scientific thought or theology or philosophy may be the ultimate reality but even these people are naturally equipped with a profound respect for things of sense.

The human tendency to live primarily in only one or two sub-universes is a function of human limitation. James interpreted this limitation theologically. God knows all aspects of the creation, knows precisely how they fit together, and therefore does not need to negate the existence of certain objects out of ignorance. “Finite creatures,” however, can only attribute reality to those objects which “...appear both *interesting* and *important*. The worlds whose objects are neither interesting nor important we treat simply negatively, we brand them as *unreal*” (II.295). To appear interesting and important is to arouse the “*emotional and active life*” of the perceiver. In tension with his indeterminist statements, James portrayed this arousal as involuntary” *whatever excites and stimulates our interest is real...*” His language in this context is again Augustinian: “...whenever an object so appeals to us that we turn to it, accept it, fill our mind with it, or practically take account of it, so far it is real for us, and we believe it. Whenever, on the contrary, we ignore it, fail to consider it or act upon it, despise it, reject it, forget it...” then the object is unreal. Typically, however, James did not refer these insights to religious sources, but rather David Hume’s insight that belief is a “lively and active” idea. James goes beyond merely speaking of lively and active ideas, but uses the language of love and hatred that was so popular to the Augustinian spirituality of American Puritanism.

By locating belief in “the affections” James utilized voluntarist language similar

to Ames's, who argued that *the will* is the *sine qua non* of belief. The pre-trichotomous faculty psychology of Puritanism did not draw a rigid distinction between affections and will. To engage the affections was to engage the will. James description therefore recapitulated the Puritan distinction between head and heart, and equated heart and will:

As bare logical thinkers, without emotional reaction, we give reality to whatever objects we think of, for they are really phenomena, or objects of our pausing thought, if nothing more. But, *as thinkers with emotional reaction, to give what seems to be a still higher degree of reality to whatever things we select and emphasize and turn to WITH A WILL.* These are our *living* realities; and not only these, but all the other things which are intimately connected with these. (I.297)

James quoted Bain, who said much the same thing: "...as Prof. Bain puts it: 'In its essential character, belief is a phase of our active nature -- otherwise called the Will'" (II.296). The interesting thing about this quote is that James here seems to adopt the more organic, affectional definition of will which was common in the Puritan period, rather than the more narrow "Arminian" notion of deliberate and effortful choice among alternatives.

In the section entitled "THE PARAMOUNT REALITY OF SENSATIONS," James continues in this deterministic vein, reminiscent of the Puritan tradition. He indirectly addresses the central question of Edwards' Freedom of the Will, i.e., What determines the will? by addressing the determinants of belief. Since belief determines volition in James's psychology, the question regarding the determination of belief is the same as the determination of will.

James was impressed with the way certain objects capture our attention and

affections, while other objects are ignored. He therefore attempted to explain what determines the believability of certain objects. His basic explanation sounds Edwardsean. *“Any relation to our mind at all, in the absence of a stronger relation, suffices to make an object real.”* He referred back to his example of the infant whose very first sensation is that of a candle. For this baby, the candle is ultimate reality, and, by implication, all actions will be fatally based upon this belief. As other objects of sensation enter into the conscious experience of this baby, contradictory messages may emerge. The question then becomes, which experience or object will be the stronger?

James’s dictum was: “As a rule, the success with which a contradicted object maintains itself in our belief is proportional to several qualities which it must possess.”

These qualities, which “run into each other” are, in descending order:

- (1) Coerciveness over attention, or the mere power to possess consciousness: then follow—
- (2) Liveliness, or sensible pungency, especially in the way of exciting pleasure or pain;
- (3) Stimulating effect upon the will, i.e., capacity to arouse active impulses, the more instinctive the better;
- (4) Emotional interest, as object of love, dread, admiration, desire, etc.;
- (5) Congruity with certain favorite forms of contemplation -- unity, simplicity, permanence, and the like;
- (6) Independence of other causes, and its own causal importance. (II.299)

The similarities between this list, and Edwards’ discussion of the things which contribute “...to the agreeableness of an object of choice” in Freedom of the Will are

noticeable. For example, just as Edwards argued that the “idea” of “the sweet relish of a delicious fruit” is stronger when tasting than imagining, James argued that “sensations are more lively and are judged more real than conceptions...” Given the Augustinian flavor of this treatment of belief, it is not surprising that Edwards’ notion of “agreeableness” is similar to James’s understanding of what makes an object appear to be real. It is not important to summarize all of the things that James thought determined the “sting” or vividness or interest that a given object elicits. The important thing to note is that, like Edwards’ treatment, James thought that these relations could to some extent be understood and enumerated.

This is not to say that James and Edwards pointed to the same determinants. The more earthly-minded James put more stress on sensible experience in the creation of belief than Edwards. He thought (claiming to follow Hume) that any object of conception must be connected to a vivid sensational experience (which we by necessity believe whole-heartedly) in order to have the requisite “pungency” of belief. Indeed, James stressed this point as decisive in the determination of competing objects of belief (and therefore volition):

Sensible vividness or pungency is then the vital factor in reality when once the conflict between objects, and the connecting of them together in the mind, has begun. No object which neither possesses this vividness in its own right nor is able to borrow it from anything else has a chance of making headway against vivid rivals, or of rousing in us that reaction in which belief consists. (I.301)

Although this emphasis on the primacy sensation is different from Edwards (based as it is upon a different metaphor), it should be noted, again, that James is in this discourse

wearing an “Augustinian” face, stressing the primary of affect (or “vividness”) over intellect. Along these lines, James also thought that humans have “...a tendency to believe in emotionally exciting objects,” and that religious belief typically falls into this category. Although James does tend to make religious belief seem largely irrational here, (a view which the Protestant psychologists considered in this dissertation would disagree), the centrality of emotion in religious belief is certainly consistent with “the Augustinian strain of piety.” So too is the fundamentally inexplicable nature of *who* will believe and who will not.

James here stumbles upon the problem of Augustinian Christianity: the realization that belief and will are in some sense entirely outside of our control. And the quest for control, for “sovereignty” or “power” or “efficiency” over *something*, is an important aspect of both Arminianism and Enlightenment.

Belief in Objects of Theory

It should be noted that James made a clear distinction between what objects *ought* to be believed and the psychological laws of actual belief. “The whole history of human thought is but an unfinished attempt...” to devise a satisfactory answer to the former question. (II.299). Yet, in the section entitled “belief in objects *of theory*,” James asserted that human experience, particularly moral experience, *requires* an “Object” of a particular kind. The corollary of this assertion is that without such an object human experience is unintelligible. Given the primacy of the object in the psychology of will, James’s thoughts here are particularly valuable in understanding the intellectual conundrum James faced as a “secular” “nonsectarian” psychologist who desired to preserve morality, meaning, and freedom. James believed passionately that there was an

“Object...to press against” but could not say particularly what that object was. The failure of James, and, perhaps, the New Psychology, was, among other things, a failure to clearly name the object.

“Merely conceived” objects are” innumerable.” As stated above, these objects are understood as belonging to one of the various ‘sub-universes.’ The sub-universes, or “systems” often contradict. How do we choose which to believe? James offered a general rule: *“the conceived system, to pass for true, must at least include the reality of the sensible objects in it, by explaining them as effects on us, if nothing more. The system which includes the most of them, and definitely explains or pretends to explain the rest of them, will, ceteris paribus, prevail”* (II.312).

No system perfectly explains all the objects of conscious experience, but it is a deep human need to try to articulate such a system. When two or more systems do an equally good job explaining an object or phenomenon, how do we decide which to believe? In practice this is usually decided by the degree to which a given system appeals to “our aesthetic, emotional, and active needs” (II.312). He fleshes this out a bit more. A system may be logically coherent (such as materialism), but fail to capture “universal acceptance” if it contradicts human needs or desires. Even worse, a theory may fail to supply an Object “to press against.” Materialism is such a theory because it “...denies reality to the objects of almost all the impulses which we most cherish.” The objects James had in mind here were not material objects, but objects of meaning or of theory, such as when a person declares “‘It is a glad world! how good is life!’ or ‘What a loathsome tedium is existence!’” In either case, the person expressing these feelings assumes that goodness or badness can actually be predicated of the Universe. Any theory

of the universe that denies this “...leaves the mind with little to care or act for” (II.313).

On a psychological level, human beings insist that “...the objects of those loves and aspirations which are our deepest energies” really exist as objects, and that our reaction to the “Cosmos” is consistent with the nature of the cosmos. The idea that the Cosmos makes *no* demands, or that the objects of our deepest longings are fictitious is a most existentially dreadful idea. Instead, a proper philosophy of life must be able to account for the full range of human experience, including “emotions” such as “...fortitude, hope, rapture, admiration, earnestness,” all of which presuppose the existence of a particular object.

James related this to the primacy of action in human psychology. Intellect is not primarily for merely speculative interests, but for action. As soon as one articulates what a person’s actions *ought* to be, however, one has said something about the Object. Similarly, comments about the character of life, e.g., that life is “real” or that it is “vanity,” also imply a description of the Object. Since our descriptions of the Object should cohere, “There is no more ludicrous incongruity than for agnostics to proclaim with one breath that the substance of things is unknowable, and with the next that the thought of it should inspire us with admiration of its glory, reverence, and a willingness to add our cooperative push in the direction towards which its manifestations seem to be drifting.”

James appears to have assumed that human beings have across the ages shared common experiences or “*powers*,” and that different philosophies of life emerge because they explain these experiences better than previous philosophies. “Primitive Christianity” was victorious because it affirmed the “weak and tender impulses” (such as

repentance) which were denied by “paganism.” The Renaissance affirmed our aesthetic impulses and the Reformation our impulses of “faith and self-despair.” The Enlightenment affirmed our desire to believe that we are capable to do what the universe demands of us. In each example, James assumed that human beings possess universal “emotional and practical tendencies.” Preeminently, “...the impulse to take life strivingly is indestructible in the race” (II.315). Human beings will therefore adopt [i.e., believe in] philosophies that make sense of these impulses. Put another way, “Man needs a rule for his will, and will invent one if one be not given him.” In essence, then, James was arguing that subjectivity comes *first*. We invent objects to correspond to these subjectivities. If the opposite were the case, however, if our notions of objectivities actually shape our subjectivities, then James may have been presuming too much. Was the subjectivity that James called “will” *really* universal? Or was it a vestige of a tradition that had jealously sought *first* to articulate the moral Object of volition? James certainly thought that the object is crucial, yet he was also well aware that also thought that “...no general off hand answer can be given as to which objects mankind shall choose as its realities” (II.316). Therefore James hesitated to name an appropriate object of volition. James’s inability to “name the object” of volition may have actually contributed to the subsequent loss of the corresponding subjectivity, i.e., the will itself.

Although James thought it difficult to dogmatically assert the objects that humans *ought* to believe, he was willing to assert that materialism, a philosophy that negates *all* objects, needed to be rejected. Yet, although Materialism violently opposed the moral impulses of human nature, James also thought that it did appeal to the “purely intellectual interests” of human nature. It simply made a lot of sense to a lot of people. Bridging this

gap between “science and sentiment” (as Noah Porter had once put it) seemed an impossible task for James. Articulating the “perfect object of belief” would require an explanation of all material and psychological events (such as the materialism of his day offered) while simultaneously affirming the universal need for transcendence. James described this object thus:

The perfect object of belief would be a God or ‘Soul of the World,’ represented both optimistically and moralistically (if such a combination could be), and withal so definitely conceived as to show us why our phenomenal experiences should be sent to us by Him in just the very way in which they come.

As noted above, the worldview of William Ames offered a solution to James’s problem. The God of Ames was the first cause of all events, assuring that all phenomena are determined and morally meaningful. But, like his father, and like the majority of religious Americans, James thought the Calvinist conception of deity failed to be sufficiently “optimistic.” Any notion of predestination was existentially unbearable. As he noted in his essay “the Dilemma of Determinism,” James could not believe that moral tragedy was fatally determined by the Universe. Just James’s father had rejected the Calvinistic predestinarian theology of his grandfather, James too rejected mechanistic predestination in favor of indeterminism. It seems that James could conceive of no other form of predestination. Since a predestined grace therefore could not be considered true grace, James thought that an ultimately indeterministic universe was the most gracious kind of universe. Yet, James sensed that this conception of the universe did violence to the scientific sentiment (i.e., “materialism”). Edwards might have claimed that James therefore longed for an *impossible* object, a determined indeterminate universe. It is not

surprising that James did not think that an ultimately satisfying ‘object of theory’ could ever be articulated. Yet, James was so sure that *this* object would satisfy the needs of the human heart that “It is safe to say that, if ever such a system is satisfactorily excogitated, mankind will drop all other systems and cling to that one alone as real” (II.317).

James closed his chapter on the perception of reality with a consideration of the “relations of belief and will.” Pointing forward to his chapter on the will, James defined will as “...a manner of attending to certain objects, or consenting to their stable presence before the mind.” The existence of these objects depends upon this attending, i.e., they will not come to pass unless the mind sustains attention upon them. Objects of belief, by way of contrast, do not depend upon this attention; their existence is independent of the thought. Yet, in both cases, the mind “...looks at the object and consents to its existence, espouses it, says ‘it shall be my reality.’ It turns to it, in short, in the interested active emotional way” (II.321). In this sense, both will and belief are the same psychological (but not physiological) phenomenon.

James dropped a hint at the free will question in this context. If we assume that the will is “indeterminate” then, since will and belief are the same psychological phenomenon, beliefs also are indeterminate. James concluded that “the first act of free-will, in short, would naturally be to believe in free-will,” an argument that James would take up again in his chapter on will (II.321).

James recognized that this formula (that the first act of freedom is to believe in freedom) did not easily cohere with his affectional theory of belief. James bluntly asserted that “we cannot control our emotions.” Since belief is our emotional reaction to a particular object, is it possible to simply believe in an object (like the ideational object

of free will) if we do not respond positively to that object? James thought that willpower could, if given enough time, and utilizing a “very simple method,” create belief: “*we need only in cold blood ACT as if the thing in question were real, and keep acting as if it were real, and it infallibly end by growing into such a connection with our life that it will become real.*” It will become so knit with habit and emotion that our interests in it will be those which characterize belief” (II.321). James applied this to religious and ethical belief. If a would-be believer simply “...make[s] a little sacrifice...ever day” to the object, belief will follow. Human efficiency may be meager, but, if properly utilized, it may *create* faith (a job that Ames and Edwards had insisted could only be God’s work, insofar that “faith” was true/saving faith in God). Further, James here seems to assume that there are objects that certain human beings *would* like to believe, but he doesn’t address the question of what would determine this desire. A person is not free to believe in God or any other object if he or she does not even *want* to believe. But James, in this chapter at least, did not address this question. In some sense, then, James’s psychology of belief presupposes a religious or moral context in which individuals would actually desire to believe in certain objects. This validity of this presupposition, foundational to the formation of nonsectarian moral culture in American higher education, is an open question.

Summary and Conclusion

After having argued that human efficiency is not threatened by the realities of physiology (chapter 10 in this dissertation), James moved on to psychology proper, the study of mental states. This chapter has therefore been a study of the way that James wove indeterminism into the most stubbornly deterministic psychological processes. The

quest for human efficiency is evident in his writing on the stream of thought, the self, attention, association, and belief (the perception of reality). James was always looking for that special place where freedom could be found, and that place was usually terrifyingly small. Still, a small space is “all that the...advocate of free will need demand” (I.594) in order to prove his Arminian point.

This chapter also provides evidence substantiating the nonsectarian thesis. In his writing on the stream of thought, James reveals a psychological pluralism, noting that different minds focus upon “a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations...” James did not assert that there was any particular object that needed to be singled out. Further, he presumed that the faculties as he understood them would be preserved. Yet, as I argued in the introduction to this dissertation, James desired to preserve the subject without its traditionally corresponding object: an experiment that may also have contributed to the loss of will in American psychology.

CHAPTER XII

A LOSS OF WILL

In chapter 9 we were introduced to the ironic possibility that the ‘Arminian’ veneration for the concept of the will may have actually contributed to the undermining of the concept. Not only did the psychology of Thomas Upham “shrink” the psychological territory attributable to the will, but it also rendered the faculty rather useless in the case of moral virtue, whenever mental “harmony” ruled out the need for a special faculty to break the stalemate between natural desires and feelings of moral obligation.

In this chapter, which deals with what James called “the production of movement” (i.e., instinct, emotion and will), we find the identical conundrum. Further, the problem of “the shrinking will” finds its climax in James. James’s chapter on the will portrays the vast majority of voluntary life as automatic and determined—a far cry from the intentional deliberative glory of the Arminian will. Yet James does identify one type of voluntary action that can be understood as free: effortful choice in the face of alternatives—the very phenomenon that shaped Upham’s entire system. Unlike Upham, however, James had a strong sense of what a small role this Arminian will has in our moment-to-moment conscious experience. Also unlike Upham, who did not have to contend with the thoroughgoing naturalism of the late 19th century, James realized that if this Arminian will is “free” in the “Arminian” sense, then it simply could not be approached scientifically (since science was and is concerned with the *causes* of mental

events). James' monumental move, then, was to remove the fragile vestiges of the Arminian will from the purview of science entirely. The will—*insofar as the term had significant moral meaning*—must, James insisted, be handed over to metaphysics. American psychology had lost its will.

The Production of Movement

James concluded his consideration of “purely inward processes” with a discussion of reasoning in chapter 22 of the Principles. He then turned to the topic of “the production of movement,” drawing his readers back, once again, to the fact that internal processes inevitably result in “...some form of bodily activity due to the escape of the central excitement through outgoing nerves” (II.372). He reminds his reader that human neurology is “...but a machine for converting stimuli into reactions; and the intellectual part of our life is knit up with but the middle or ‘central’ portion of the machine’s operations.” The production of movement, by contrast, has to do with the resultant efferent impulses terminating in bodily movement. More specifically, any sensory input *diffuses* throughout the nervous organism, and thereby influences the entire body. James thought that three psychological phenomena were the chief examples of the production of movement: instinctive action, emotional expression, and voluntary action. The first two are worth considering briefly, for they again are related to the crucial voluntary/non-voluntary distinction that is prevalent in the Principles.

Instinct

James thought that the typical understanding of instinct, as a tendency “...*of acting in such away as to produce certain ends, without foresight of the ends, and without previous education in the performance*” (II.383) was fair enough. Although many would

agree that instinct applies in “the animal kingdom,” James thought that instinctual behavior also characterized human action.

Particular Instinctive actions are brought about by particular stimuli. That is, instincts are reflexive acts. As such, they are fatally determined. For example, a cat is on a biological level “framed” in such a way that he “cannot help” but run after a mouse (II.384).

James thought it possible to understand the strange instinctual behavior of animals by consulting his own instinctual reactions. Through this analysis James concluded that the organism animated by an instinct is not consciously concerned with utility. Instead, the one propelled by instinct simply finds itself strongly attracted to certain objects. Consideration of adaptiveness is strictly philosophical and *post hoc*. Cuckoo birds, for example, which utilize other bird’s nests, are “...simply excited by the perception of quite determinate sorts of nest...” (II.389) not by any abstract consideration of function. Instead, at the level of experience, instinctual impulses seem “...the only eternally right and proper thing to do,” and are ends in themselves (I.387). Instinctual impulses are like loves. The lion loves the lioness instinctually, the bear loves the “she-bear.” Although not explicitly Augustinian in nature, the emphasis on love is, again, reminiscent of that tradition. The fact that when James interpreted animal instinct he saw them as loves is consistent with the idea that there is “an Augustinian strain of piety” in James. Again, the goal here is not to over-interpret or to posit some sort of causality, but to merely highly similarities.

It was common in James’s day to say that humans do not have instincts but are, rather, rational creatures. Yet reason, James asserted (following Kant), includes the

impulse “...to obey impulses of a certain lofty sort, such as duty, or universal ends” (II.389). If “rational” human impulses such as these are included under the title of instinct, James thought, human beings then have *many* instincts, which, as I will show, he catalogued in this chapter.

James argued that higher mental processes such as memory complicate instinctual behavior, rendering it less fatal as the agent becomes consciously aware of ends pursued. Memory of past actions create expectancies for future results. These expectancies may or may not consist with present instinctual desires. If not, typically instinctual impulses may be overridden. Further, higher animals are endowed with contradictory impulses and instincts which naturally lead to a more cautious and less automatic way of responding to the world. Since reason has power to control and “set loose” certain instincts over others, it follows that human beings may actually possess a far greater number of instincts. Yet because of this controlling power of reason, humanity is “never...the fatal automaton which a *merely* instinctive animal would be” (II.393).

Ever interested in showing how the powers of inevitability may be thwarted, James discussed two other ways in which merely instinctual behavior may be overridden. James noted that “messrs. D. A. Spaulding and Romanes” had fastened their attention on two particular phenomena because they seemed to be “derangements in the mental constitution” and because they seemed to be cases in which “...the instinctive machinery has got out of gear” (II.394). It is significant that James would relish phenomena that were confounding respected European determinists. The two principles, James argued, are “...the *inhibition of instincts by habits*,” and “...the *transitoriness of instincts*” (II.393). In the former case, early responses to instinctual impulses eventually override

the instinctual impulses. For example, humans have an instinctual desire for food, but once we have found a few menu items we like, we tend to be content with those items. In the latter case, the “*law of transitoriness*” has to do with the fact that some instincts emerge during definite points in the development of the organism and then fade away. The thing that perplexed some thinkers was how instinctual impulses seemed to continue past the period in which the impulses were active. James thought that habit was a much better explanation than that of machinery getting out of gear. That is, an instinctual impulse may be repeated so often so as to become habitual, ensuring that the behavior continues after the impulse is gone. Given that James used strong deterministic language in discussing these two phenomena, it is clear that his purpose of discussing these phenomena was not to undermine deterministic processes *per se*, but rather to show that behavior is much more complex than a simple mechanistic scheme would allow.

James gave a lengthy discussion of human instincts. Although he admitted that enumerating instincts is “a somewhat arbitrary matter,” he also affirmed that humans have more instincts than any other species. Human instincts include the reflexes possessed in infancy, walking, vocalization, imitation, emulation or rivalry, pugnacity/anger/resentment, sympathy, hunting, fear, appropriation/aquisitiveness, constructiveness, play, curiosity, sociability/shyness, secretiveness, cleanliness, modesty/shame, love, jealousy, and parental love.

James ended the chapter with a moral exhortation to parents. It is crucial to provide growing children with objects that coincide with the various instincts that arise at different points in development. The developmental outcome for children undergoing a “starvation of objects” is dire:

Compare the accomplished gentleman with the poor artisan or tradesman of a city: during the adolescence of the former, objects appropriate to his growing interests, bodily and mental, were offered as fast as the interests awoke, and, as a consequence, he is armed and equipped at every angle to meet the world. Sport came to the rescue and completed his education where real things were lacking. He has tasted of the essence of every side of human life, being sailor, hunter, athlete, scholar, fighter, talker, dandy, man of affairs, etc., all in one. Over the city poor boy's youth no such golden opportunities were hung, and in his manhood no desires for most of them exist. Fortunate it is for him if gaps are the only anomalies his instinctive life presents; perversions are too often the fruit of his unnatural bringing up. (II.441)

In a way reminiscent of his dire prognostications for youth with bad habits, James offered little hope for the adult who as a child was object-starved. This particular "...individual then grows up with gaps in his psychic constitution which future experiences can *never* fill" (II.441, Italics mine). The notion that there are objects that correspond to universal subjectivities is an idea we encountered in James's thoughts on belief in his chapter on the perception of reality (chapter 11 in this dissertation).

Emotion

James thought it very difficult to separate instincts from emotions because instinctual reactions always contain some emotional element: "Objects of rage, love, fear, etc., not only [instinctually] prompt a man to outward deeds, but provoke characteristic [emotional] alterations in his attitude and visage, and affect his breathing, circulation, and

other organic functions in specific ways” (II.442). James also thought that emotions and instincts (like belief and will) are, at a physiological level, one and the same.

James thought that making a long list of types of emotions, which was the contemporary practice, was a tedious and unhelpful exercise. Instead, James offered a theory of emotions, a theory that he had in common with the “Danish physiologist” Charles Lange. This theory challenged the prevailing theory (like the one we saw in Thomas Upham): that emotions *follow* some perception of an event, which, in turn, influence the body. James simply desired to equate emotion with the bodily arousal. That is, “...*bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion*” (II.449). These bodily reactions to perceptions add heat to otherwise cold cognitions. “Without the bodily states following on the perception, the latter would be purely cognitive in form, pale, colorless, destitute of emotional warmth” (II.450). James goes on for pages making the point that emotion and bodily responses are inextricably linked. He desired to stress “...how much our mental life is knit up with our corporeal frame...” (II.467), and marshaled as much evidence as he could to make the point. Given that the prevailing opinion was that emotion was something other than physiology, it is understandable that he did so. But, from the perspective of volition, it is the automaticity of the emotional/physiological reactions to perception which is the central issue. James thought it beyond doubt that certain objects automatically issue in physiological responses. The body is a “sounding board” for the perceptions of the mind. In other words, emotions cannot be chosen. But, as we shall see, perceptions (or *ideas*), can be chosen.

The Will

James began his chapter on the will utilizing language that Upham would have felt comfortable with, arguing that desire is different than will, and may or may not actually lead to volition. Yet, consistent with the somatic theme running through the *Principles*, James immediately relates the will to the body. “The only ends which follow *immediately* upon our willing seem to be movements of our own bodies.” Yet, even though Ames, Edwards, and Upham did not focus much on the body, the issue of the connection between the inward and the outward runs through the entire tradition. What set James apart, at least at first glance, was that he thought a responsible treatment of the will to include a discussion of “the mechanism of production” of voluntary bodily movements. (Also interesting is that James thought the elements of his treatment of the will “difficult to arrange in any continuous logical order.” (II.486; Upham was of course radically different from James in this regard). Up to this point, James had been discussing bodily movements that were “automatic and reflex” and “unforeseen by the agent” (II.486). To contrast, voluntary movements are those that are done “with full prevision” (II.487). Unlike the primary, involuntary “explosions” associated with reflexes, instincts, and emotions, voluntary movement is “secondary.” Further, all muscular movements are initially involuntary. We learn to perform these movements voluntarily only later. As will become clearer below, the execution of these voluntary movements is mediated through the “ideas” of these movements which are deposited in memory. These memorial ideas are sensory and may have optical, tactile, auditory, and other aspects. Most important are the “kinesthetic impressions” associated with the given

movement. These impressions include the feelings associated with the various muscles, ligaments, “articular surfaces,” and skin as they engage in specific movements.

James quoted at length a number of experiments showing that “the successful carrying out of a concatenated series of movements” requires “*guiding sensations*.” Typically, the guiding sensations of movement are the kinesthetic impressions. The quoted experiments were of interest because they involved “anesthetic” subjects who had lost their kinesthetic impressions. As long as movements were continually guided by some remaining sense, the movements could be successfully completed. But without the input of this sense, the movements would fail to occur or fail to be sustained. For example, one anesthetic patient could move a limb only as long as he looked at the limb. The movement failed when he closed his eyes (II.490). Typically, of course, a movement can be completed with the eyes closed, but only because the kinesthetic impressions allow not only for the continuation but also the moment by moment adjustments requisite for the successful completion of the movement. James concluded that kinesthetic impressions²⁹ are “indispensable...for our voluntary activity” (II.492).

We may consequently set it down as certain that, *whether or no there be anything else in the mind at the moment when we consciously will a certain act, a mental*

²⁹ In the full passage from which I quote in this sentence, James actually says that “passive sensations” are indispensable, not kinesthetic impressions. I think that the term kinesthetic impressions actually better expresses his point here. Passive sensations are the kinesthetic impressions associated with “passive movements” (II.488), i.e., “movements communicated to our limbs by others” (II.488). Yet, it seems to me that James’ broader point between pages 488-492 is that “kinesthetic impressions” (not just passive sensations) (II.488) are necessary for successful movement. “Kinesthetic impressions” is a broader term, defined above, of which passive sensations are a species. Since not all of the examples James uses to illustrate the importance of kinesthetic impressions deal with passive movements, I conclude that it is not the “feelings of passive movement” (II.489), a term I take as synonymous with passive sensation of movement) or the “passive sensations of movement” (II.492) which are indispensable, but the kinesthetic impressions. This conclusion is supported by the idea that his summary of his position on pages 492-493 substitutes the broader word “kinesthetic” for the more narrow idea of “passive sensation” indicating that he was using them synonymously at this point (and inconsistently in the passage).

conception made up of memory-images of these sensations, defining which special act it is, must be there. (II.492)

James's "first thesis" concerning volition, therefore, was that "...*there need be nothing else, and that in perfectly simple voluntary acts there is nothing else, in the mind but the kinesthetic idea, thus defined, of what the act is to be*" (II.492-493).

I would like to highlight two things in this quotation. First is the apparent narrowness of the definition of volition. James, at this point at least, reduces volition to the desire to carry out muscular movements. The "act" is simply the execution of certain muscular and bodily movements. Second is the apparent "intellectualism" of this passage. Remember, intellectualism was the idea that the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Here too James is arguing that the will follows the understanding (i.e., the kinesthetic *idea*). The issue is complicated by the fact that James was inconsistent on both of these issues. For example, James's discussion of belief in his chapter on the perception of reality (see chapter 11) leaned in a voluntarist direction. Nevertheless, at this point, let us focus on the current form of Jamesean intellectualism expressed here.

The Feeling of Innervation

In positing this modern form of "intellectualism," James had to contradict the leading European psychologists of his era. He was, at the same time, continuing the tradition of modified intellectualism that had characterized the indigenous mental philosophy tradition of the nineteenth century.

James began his challenge of Wundtian voluntarism (and more broadly, European determinism) by asking "*Now is there anything else in the mind* [besides kinesthetic

ideas] *when we will to do an act?*” To his chagrin, James noted that there currently was “a powerful tradition in Psychology” that posited that “something additional to these images of passive sensation is essential to the mental determination of a voluntary act” (II.493). To put the issue simply, this extra something was feeling. Like the voluntarists of old, the contemporary consensus was that voluntary actions were most closely aligned with affective states rather than intellectual ones.³⁰

To put the issue in its more complicated form, these European voluntarists posited “feelings of innervation,” i.e., the “feelings” associated with the “special current of energy going out from the brain into the appropriate muscles during the act” (II.493). James strongly agreed that there was an outgoing (efferent) current from brain to muscle, but he disagreed strongly with the idea that these currents *per se* have associated feelings. As if the feeling of innervation were a religious creed, James boldly proclaimed, “*I disbelieve in its existence*” (II.493). He therefore thought that a refutation of the concept was necessary, even if it were one of “tedious length.” Danziger (2001) corroborates this contention, noting that the concept of the feeling of innervation was “far more important to James than it was to Wundt” (p. 117) because of its relevance to James’s intellectualism and desire for free will.

At first glance, the feeling of innervation is plausible given our experiences of intentional activities, such as playing “ten-pins or billiards, or throw[ing] a ball.” We feel the exertion we are making, and the feeling seems to be the feeling of the nerves surging

³⁰ Although this sounds similar to Upham, the crucial difference between the European voluntarists (at least Wundt—see Danziger, 2001), and Upham, who is, I think, best characterized as an intellectualist, was the radical distinction that Upham posited between intellect, sensibility, and will. Although sensibilities are most closely linked to the will, they do not have a strict determinative influence on the will in Upham’s thought. But the sensibilities, i.e., those aspects of consciousness traditionally called “will,” *are* strictly determined by the intellect, which was the intellectualist position.

forward toward the chosen object. But a careful consideration of the issue reveals that these feelings are nothing more “than mere vestiges of former passive sensibility accompany[ing] it [i.e., the movement]” (II.493). The “discharge into the motor nerves” must be “insentient,” and the “ideas of movement” and even the feeling of “effort” are simply images or ideas of the aforementioned sensations. There really was no “a priori” reason to think that a motor impulse would be sentient [that would be to speak of motor impulses as if they were sensory impulses], so James thought the burden of proof lay upon the Europeans to prove their point.

Still, James thought it best to lay out a detailed refutation of the feeling of innervation (pp. 494-518). The first point he desired to make was “that *the assumption of the feeling of innervation is unnecessary*” (II.494). James thought that the belief in the necessity of the feeling of innervation for voluntary activity was reminiscent of “the scholastic prejudice that ‘the effect must already in some way be *contained* in the cause.’” Contrary to this maxim, which, stated differently, posited that there must be a similarity between cause and effect, James thought that there was a radical *discontinuity* between the cause of reflexive action or emotions and the reflexes or emotions themselves. These reflexes are “knocked out of us” by their respective stimuli, and sometimes the resultant reflexes or emotions “surprise us” (II.494). James thought the link between consciousness and movement in these cases seemed “essentially discontinuous” (II.495). Why should the body move in one particular way rather than another at a particular stimulus? Certainly not because we could feel it coming: the reactions surprise us. Since these reflexes and emotions neither required nor possessed the feeling of innervation, why should the voluntary actions, which are built upon the reservoir of memorial ideas of

such events? Certainly the idea itself should be sufficient to produce the effect. No feeling of innervation is necessary. All that is necessary are “the kinesthetic ideas...or images of *incoming* feelings of attitude and motion” (II.495, italics mine).

Before moving to the empirical evidence, James outlined “*a certain a priori reason why the kinesthetic images OUGHT to be the last psychic antecedents of the outgoing currents, and why we should expect these currents to be insentient; why, in short, the soi-disant feelings of innervation should NOT exist*” (II.496). James reminded his colleagues of the well-accepted and “dominating law” that consciousness tends to drop awareness of all processes that do not aid the animal in achieving its ends. Sometimes this awareness is lost because of redundancy, i.e., there already is a sufficient sign in consciousness leading the animal to its end. In the case of purposive and efficient human actions, consciousness of “means” drops out entirely. “The marksman ends by thinking only of the exact position of the goal, the singer only of the perfect sound,” etc. (II.497). Now, James asked, which would be the more parsimonious explanation of volition, a path from idea to feeling to volition, or simply a link between idea to volition? As if to appease his determinist colleagues, James said that in this case “everything would then be unambiguously determined” (II.498). As we shall see, however, this did not make James’s psychology of volition *entirely* deterministic.

James argued that the introspective evidence contradicted the feeling of innervation as well. The thing we notice introspectively is the “afferent feelings coming from the muscles themselves and their insertions, from the vicinity of the joints, and from the general fixation of the larynx, chest, face, and body, in the phenomenon of effort, objectively considered” (II.500). When a person wills a particular motor movement, the

only thing preceding the movement is the thought of the sensations and the results of the sensations. In order to avoid sounding too deterministic here, James added that although “there is no room for any third order of mental phenomenon” between idea and volition, that there is still “indeed the *fiat*, the element of consent, or resolve that the act shall ensue,” which “constitutes the essence of the voluntariness of the act.” James promised to treat the fiat at a later point. Yet it is significant that James both denied and embraced a “third order of mental phenomenon” in his psychology of volition: “*An anticipatory image, then, of the sensorial consequences of a movement, plus (on certain occasions) the fiat that these consequences shall become actual, is the only psychic state which introspection lets us discern as the forerunner of our voluntary acts*” (II.501). As we shall see, the “*plus*” in this quote is similar to the “plus” in the Arminian psychology of Thomas Upham: an indeterministic and “free” consent of a faculty of will thought to protect the actor from the evils of necessity. Yet, as we shall see, James did not argue that the fiat is always indeterminate, either.

James’s next argument was to challenge the “circumstantial evidence” used to advocate the feeling of innervation. One example was Wundt’s contention motor feelings cannot be due to afferent impulses because, if they were, one would expect the feeling to correspond exactly to the actual muscular activity exerted in any act. Wundt cited the example of the “half paralyzed” in whom a feeling of great strain is accompanied with a normal exertion. James quoted Ferrier to show that the use of “half paralyzed” patients was problematic because their feelings of effort are always tied to some muscular activity. If only one arm is paralyzed, the effort to close the fist of the paralyzed hand is accompanied by actual muscular effort in the functioning hand. It is

this afferent inputs from this muscular activity that serve as the source of the feeling of strenuous effort.

James also utilized experimental research on “optical vertigo” (the illusion of “movement in objects”) to illustrate the point. Typically, we perceive movement in two cases: when an image of a moving object moves across a stationary retina, or when the image of a moving object remains in the center of the retina as the eye follows the object. In either case, misjudgments about the status of the eye will result in illusory perceptions. For example, if we believe a moving eye is stationary, and the image moves across the retina, we may also perceive movement when there is none. Or, if we believe an unmoving eye is moving and the image remains centered, we may experience a perception of movement when there actually isn’t any. Helmholtz produced this latter type of illusion occurs by paralyzing “the external rectus muscle of the right eye” which removed the ability of the eye to move outward, away from the nose. So, with the left eye kept under a patch, the subject would at rest have his eye fixed on an image in front of the eye. The eye still and the object centered on the unmoving retina. A perception of an unmoving object follows. When the subject moves his eye to the left, the subject is able to do so. The image moves along the retina. A perception of an unmoving object results. When the subject is told to move his eye to the right, the subject is unable to do so, although the subject believes he can. The eye fails to move, the image fails to move, but, believing that the eye is moving to the right, the object appears to move to the right. Helmholtz thought that the feeling of will or feeling of innervation determined the perception. It could not have been an afferent feeling, of course, because there was no movement of the right eye to be reported back to the brain through the afferent nerves.

James replied that what Helmholtz failed to consider was the left eye. Since the left eye still could move to the right, the so-called feeling of innervation was really nothing more than the afferent feeling associated with the left eye. The visual system makes use of *this* information, thus producing the illusion.

After completing his survey of the “circumstantial evidence for the feeling of innervation,” concluding that this evidence “break[s] down like the introspective evidence,” James moved on to describe experiments which he thought positively demonstrated that these feelings do not exist. He quoted the work of “Messrs. Gley and Marillier” upon a patient whose “...entire arms, and his trunk down to the navel, were insensible both superficially and deeply, but his arms were not paralyzed.” This patient was able to hold up various objects of differing weights, but was unable to perceive differences in weight. The efferent impulses were appropriate to the task, but this appropriateness had nothing to do with feeling them. The visual inputs were sufficient to the task. When these inputs were taken away, the ability was lost.

After completing this survey of evidence, James concluded, “on the whole, then, it seems as probable as anything can well be, that these feelings of innervation do not exist.” Instead, it appeared to James that “the entire content and material of our consciousness - consciousness of movement, as of all things else - is thus of peripheral origin, and came to us in the first instance through the peripheral nerves.” James then asked *the* question: “what [is it that] we gain by this sensationalistic conclusion...”? His first answer was scientific and conservative: “I reply that we gain at any rate simplicity and uniformity.” His second answer, however, was more bold and got to the heart of matters. James recounted the traditional concern with “sensationalistic” psychology, that

it is “a degrading belief” because it “abolishes all inward originality and spontaneity,” i.e., the hallmarks of free action. Yet, these “advocates of inward spontaneity” may not have realized that they were “turning their backs” on the “real citadel” of free will. “Let all our thoughts of movements be of sensational constitution,” James boldly asserted. “Still,” freedom of will can be found:

in the emphasizing, choosing, and espousing of one of them rather than another, in the saying to it, ‘be thou the reality for me,’ there is ample scope for our inward initiative to be shown. Here, it seems to me, the true line between the passive materials and the activity of the spirit should be drawn. It is certainly false strategy to draw it between such ideas as are connected with the outgoing and such as are connected with the incoming neural wave. (II.518)

Although feelings of innervation do not exist, and although kinesthetic ideas necessarily lead to outward actions, humans still possess freedom in choosing the kinesthetic ideas by which they will live. For James, this process was constrained only by previous experience and consciousness. Once the ideas existed in memory, and were suggested in consciousness, the will could freely choose whichever of these ideas would be “reality.” This selection is an indeterministic process, analogous to the choice of Upham’s faculty of will between natural or moral sensibilities. Both psychologies were “Arminian” in that they removed the will from the web of cause and effect.

James closes this section of his chapter on the will by considering the *type* of kinesthetic idea that activates movement. James had distinguished between “*remote*” and “*resident*” ideas, the former having to do with distant impressions made by “the eye or ear,” for example, and the latter having to do with impressions made on one’s “muscles,

joints, etc.” James thought that early on the resident ideas may be most important, but as behaviors grow in complexity and sophistication, the remote idea of the goal is usually all that is needed to activate the movement. James gave his own experience of writing as an example of how the remote “idea of the end” is sufficient to activate a chain of movements, as well as an explanation of how this chain develops:

As I write, I have no anticipation, as a thing distinct from my sensation, of either the look or the digital feel of the letters which flow from my pen. The words chime on my mental *ear*, as it were, before I write them, but not on my mental eye or hand. This comes from the rapidity with which often-repeated movements follow on their mental cue. An end consented to as soon as conceived innervates directly the centre of the first movement of the chain which leads to its accomplishment, and then the whole chain rattles off *quasi-reflexly* [sic], as was described on pp.115-6 of Vol. I. (II.519)

His reference to the quasi-reflexive “chain” of movements was discussed in his chapter on habit, which is summarized in chapter 10. Because certain movements are chained together through experience, it is not necessary that the mind have a chain of distinct thoughts to activate each link in the chain. The thought of the goal is sufficient to activate the chain.

Ideo-Motor Action

James concluded his discussion on the types of ideas that activate movements acknowledging that “many readers” would find his discussion up to this point troubling because of its deterministic-sounding language. What his discussion up to this point lacked, James admitted, was a consideration of the “fiat” or “consent to the movement”

that sometimes seems to be “required in addition to the mere conception” of the movement (II.521). So, having dispensed with the foregoing “tedious preliminary matter,” James moved on to consider this question a little more carefully. Yet, as we shall see, his first answer to the question concerning the role of the “fiat” was that this beloved aspect of the volitional life actually plays a very small role in most of our behaviors. By admitting this, however, James was at odds with himself as to the implications of this assertion. Did this mean that will itself (defined as fiat) has a very small role in our conscious life? Or was the “fiat” only a small part of our volitional activity? To put the question in other words: was the will a broad concept that *included* the fiat, or was the will defined in a more strictly “Arminian” sense as effortful fiat? James was, I believe, tellingly indecisive with his answer to this question.

James summed the question thus:

The question is this: *Is the bare idea of a movement's sensible effects its sufficient mental cue* (p. 497), *or must there be an additional mental antecedent, in the shape of a fiat, decision, consent, volitional mandate, or other synonymous phenomenon of consciousness, before the movement can follow?* (II.522).

His answer to the question was “sometimes.” “Sometimes the bare idea is sufficient, but sometimes an additional conscious element, in the shape of a fiat, mandate, or express consent, has to intervene and precede the movement” (II.522). James discussed the former case first. When the “bare idea is sufficient,” that is, “whenever movement follows *unhesitatingly and immediately*” the idea in the mind, we have the phenomenon of “ideo-motor action.” There is no conflict in the mind during ideo-motor action: “we think the act and it is done; and that is all that introspection tells us of the matter.” James

thought that this is “the normal process” (II.522). As is the case when we mindlessly reach for a snack as we engage in conversation, our movements in this case are “fatally” determined, requiring “no express fiat” (II.523). For this reason, James wondered whether or not ideo-motor actions should actually be considered volitions at all. “...It is often difficult to decide whether not to call them reflex rather than volitional acts.” To this same effect he quoted Lotze, who thought that “all the acts of our daily life” happen in a way that does not require “a distinct impulse of the will.” That is, since the normal activities of daily life do not require an explicit choice, the will need not be involved in these activities. Again, this would be a more narrow (and Arminian) way of defining will.

James indecision here is crucial in interpreting his psychology of volition, and, perhaps, understanding his role in the loss of will in American psychology. James, like Lotze (and like Upham), thought along with his “many readers” that “the express fiat” or explicit, deliberate and free *choice* constituted the essence of volitional activity. Yet here, confronted with the growing awareness of the fact that most human activity is to some degree automatic (an awareness that Upham possessed only dimly), James had to deal with the implication that his precious “Arminian” will perhaps had very little to do with daily life. The doctrine of ideo-motor action moved the secular “Arminians” *toward* Edwards’ conclusion: that the self-determined will was in reality a non-reality. In this section of the Principles we find James taking a surprisingly un-Arminian position, yet a position that he did not sustain throughout the Principles.

Given that fiat-less ideo-motor action is the norm, James moved on to consider the exceptions to this rule. What impedes the ideo-motor mechanism? To answer this

question, James had to first answer the converse question: When *does* ideo-motor activity take place? James's answer: whenever there is a lack of conflict on the ideational level. This lack of conflict may occur because there is only one idea present to the mind, or because the several ideas present to the mind all point in the same direction. James used the "hypnotic subject" to demonstrate the idea that ideo-motor action takes place when only one idea is in the mind. The reason hypnotic subjects are so responsive to the suggestions of others is that there are no competing thoughts in the hypnotized mind. Although I will not analyze James's chapter on hypnotism (which interestingly follows his chapter on will), one can see that hypnotism was indeed important to James because of its relation to will. The implication of all this is that Ideo-motor action *cannot* take place when there is some sort of ideational *conflict*, yet cannot *help* but take place without conflict. For James, as for Upham, situations of mental conflict were the occasions of the will's most valuable work. Indeed, Upham's entire psychological system was designed to maximize conflict (between the natural and moral sensibilities) so as to maximize the usefulness of his otherwise useless and redundant will.

James summarized his argument up to this point: "*every representation of a movement awakens in some degree the actual movement which is the object; and awakens it in a maximum degree whenever it is not kept from so doing by an antagonistic representation present simultaneously to the mind*" (II.526). It is interesting to note here in passing that James's definition of the object of volition here is very similar to Edwards, i.e., the action itself, rather than some material or ideal object outside of the self. It also appears that there are some tensions with this formulation of the object and his earlier

treatments in the Principles, although I will not subject these tensions to analysis at this point.

So where does the fiat fit in? Only in the case of “antagonistic representation,” or when there is some conflict in the mind concerning which movement to execute. Yet James at this point still hesitated to explicate the doctrine of fiat because he wants to make the potentially unpopular implications of his thought clear at this point. The fact that a fiat is not normally required in motor activity (i.e., not required when “conditions are simple”), contradicted the “common prejudice that voluntary action without ‘exertion of will-power’ is Hamlet with the prince’s part left out...” (II.526). Yet this should not be of concern because consciousness itself is by “*its very nature impulsive*.” That is, a deliberate choice is not always needed to get the muscular machinery moving. Unlike what appears to have been the case in Upham’s psychology, consciousness is sufficient to that end. “We do not have a sensation or a thought and then have to *add* something dynamic to it to get a movement.” Still, the belief that there must be “some superadded ‘will-force’” is understandable given the fact that there are “special cases” in which some effort is needed to overcome the antagonism between two opposing thoughts.

Given the ubiquity of ideo-motor action, however, James thought that it must therefore be the first reference-point in any psychology of volition. “*Movement is the natural immediate effect of feeling, irrespective of what the quality of the feeling may be. It is so in reflex action, it is so in emotional expression, it is so in the voluntary life.*” Therefore, one must never “soften” or “explain away” the reality of ideo-motor action. “It obeys the type of all conscious action, and from it one must start to explain action in which a special fiat is involved” (II.527).

Two things are of interest concerning these comments. First, notice that James does in fact at this point, despite his earlier reticence, call ideo-motor activity volitional. Movement is the immediate effect of feeling “in the voluntary life” (II.527). His quote concerning “Hamlet with the prince’s part left out” is to the same effect. As we shall see below, his example of getting out of bed also seems to equate simple ideo-motor activity with volition. The reason this is important is that James at this point allows for a broader, “non-Arminian” conception of will. Will is not reduced to deliberate choice of “fiat.” Yet, as I mentioned earlier, James is not entirely consistent on this point, and this inconsistency is important.

Second, notice that James uses the word “feeling” in the quote above, where the reader has grown accustomed to hearing the word ‘idea’: “*Movement is the natural immediate effect of feeling...*” If we take this move as deliberate (and I would imagine it was), this would offer a link between James’s thoughts in this chapter, and his previous thoughts on belief in the chapter on the perception of reality. In that chapter, James spoke of beliefs as (to use a contemporary phrase) “hot” cognitions, affectively-loaded ideas which have power and “sting” for the individual. Perhaps James replaced the word idea with the word “feeling” here (as he does in the next paragraph: “Try to feel...” II.527) to signify that the “ideas” in ideo-motor action are not mere cognitions, but ideas infused with personal meaning and power. If this is the case, then James’s psychology can less easily be characterized as intellectualist, but takes on a decidedly more “voluntarist” hue. This would make James’s theory of will (i.e., theory of ideo-motor action) closer to that of Ames and Edwards (and Wundt—see Danziger, 2001) rather than Upham.

We still have not answered the important question: What determines the outcome when there are conflicting ideas before the mind, hindering voluntary movement? James laid out two basic answers to this question. The most common occurrence is for there to be “a fortunate lapse of consciousness” in which one of the opposing ideas falls away, and the remaining idea activates the chain of movements. To illustrate this point James discussed the experience of getting out of bed “on a freezing morning in a room without a fire.” This is ultimate case of ideational ambivalence. On the one hand the person knows that duty dictates an immediate awakening, but, on the other, the warmth of the bed and the threat of the cold inhibit the just impulse. This can continue for hours until, suddenly, “the idea flashes across us, ‘Hollo! I must lie here no longer! – an idea which at that lucky instant awakens no contradictory or paralyzing suggestions and consequently produces immediately is appropriate motor effects” (II.524). This scenario, in which the actual movement is carried out “without any struggle or decision at all,” James took as the normal way ideational conflict is resolved. Still, James did not hesitate to say that this case of decisionless activity “contain[s] in miniature form the data for an entire psychology volition” (II.525), again contradicting his other statements which indicate that deliberate and effortful choice is the essence of will. As for the other way in which conflict is resolved, James left that topic for the next section of the Principles.

Finally, at first glance, it may appear that James’s concept of will was more constricted than the theories of Ames and Edwards and even Upham, because James insisted (contra our earlier writers) that volition must result in some sort of movement. Yet this is probably not an accurate conclusion since James’s concept of movement was quite broad:

from the physiological point of view a gesture, an expression of the brow, or an expulsion of the breath are movements as much as an act of locomotion is. A king's breath slays as well as an assassin's blow; and the outpouring of those currents which the magic imponderable streaming of our ideas accompanies need not always be of an explosive or otherwise physically conspicuous kind. (II.527-528)

This approach is consistent with James notion of emotion in which the physiological and muscular movements which constitute the essence of emotional activity may be very subtle indeed.

Action After Deliberation

After having argued that the vast majority of human activity is automatic, and entertaining the notion that such automatic behavior might be considered volitional, James finally turned to consider the situation in which ideational conflict is not resolved by "a fortunate lapse of consciousness" (i.e., a non-effortful shift in consciousness in which one of the conflicting ideas disappears or is made ineffectual). In these cases, which are rare compared to the normal flow of conscious experience, the impassive is settled through "deliberation," "decision," or "fiat."

Prior to a decision comes "*indecision*." Indecision is the subjective feeling that accompanies a conscious mind conflicted with antagonistic "motives." The motives (or "reasons") are the "reinforcing and inhibiting ideas" pushing and pulling consciousness in opposite directions. The object of consciousness during indecision is "extremely complex," being composed of "the whole set of motives and their conflict" (II.528). The "oscillations of our attention" and the "'associative' flow of our ideas" are such that

different aspects of this object stand out at different times. The motives pulling toward the decision may gain strength, but there are always countervailing motives pulling the other way. Indecision therefore remains. James's description of this experience of indecision is vivid, perhaps arising from his own struggles over decisions in his life:

The deliberation may last for weeks or months, occupying at intervals the mind. The motives which yesterday seemed full of urgency and blood and life to-day feel strangely weak and pale and dead. But as little to-day as to-morrow is the question finally resolved. Something tells us that all this is provisional; that the weakened reasons will wax strong again, and the stronger weaken; that equilibrium is unreachd; that testing our reasons, not obeying them, is still the order of the day, and that we must wait awhile, patient or impatiently, until our mind is made up 'for good and all.' (II.529)

"...This condition, plainly enough," James seemed to groan, "is susceptible of indefinite continuance." If we do notice something of personal significance here to James, perhaps the psychology of Thomas Upham can actually help to describe it. If we take Upham's veneration of "consistency of character" as indicative of the values of the moral culture of American higher education, perhaps James did feel a bit out of place. James's discussion of the motives which seem to be universally "in play" during decision seems to corroborate this. We turn to this discussion now.

Before discussing the several actual ways that indecision is finally conquered (i.e., the "types of decision"), James described three "motives" which he thought to be "more or less constantly in play" in decision making. Each of these is telling. For one, James thought that people are simply impatient "*of the deliberative state*" (II.529), preferring

decision and action to “the tension of doubt and hesitancy” (II.530). Perhaps James looked down upon this human tendency as an unwillingness to confront the real uncertainties of life. Similarly, James thought that another motive involved here is “the impulse to persist in a decision once made.” This impulse characterizes those with “resolute” natures, the very kind of people that Upham seemed to admire so much. James actually seems critical here, too. Although both “resolute and irresolute” people make rash decisions, the resolute suffer from the added folly of persisting in an unwise course “simply because we hate to ‘change our mind’” (II.530). Again, one wonders if James is not subtly criticizing the excesses of Victorian willpower here. James also may have been a bit critical of himself in describing a third kind of motive involved in decision making (or the lack of it): “the *dread of the irrevocable*,” which is often found in “a type of character incapable of prompt and vigorous resolve.” Upham certainly was critical of this of “type of character” as well, while the concept seems absent from Ames or Edwards.

It is interesting that throughout this discussion, James used the language of motive, a type of language that Edwards was very comfortable with. Indeed, James like Edwards, does speak of motives as having weights, although he uses other metaphors such as “sharp” or “dim” or “extreme” (II.529, 530). The question we bring into the next section, then, is: does James think of motives as the Calvinist Edwards did, the “strongest” complex motive determining the volition, or did he articulate a more “Arminian” approach to motives where motive strength is trumped by the power of the will? To answer this question we turn to his discussion of “types of decision.”

The Five Types of Decision

James discussed “five types of decision,” most of which I will not discuss here. To give some indication of the flavor of this discussion, I briefly mention “*the reasonable type*” of decision in which the ideational impasse is bridged when “arguments” for both sides are weighed and considered. “Gradually and almost insensibly” the correct alternative becomes apparent to the mind, allowing an easy decision “without effort or constraint,” i.e., seemingly “ow[ing] nothing to our will” (II.531). The first four types of ‘decision’ are like this, when the tension is resolved without effort.

The final type of decision is, however, quite important for the purposes of this dissertation. This is the type of decision in which “we feel, in deciding, as if we ourselves by our own willful act inclined the beam” (II.534). James chose to defer the metaphysical question of whether this “heave of the will” implies the existence of “a will-power distinct from motives.” At this point James desired to remain scientific, relying only on the subjective testimony of consciousness. At a phenomenological level, this fifth type of decision is simply “*the feeling of effort.*” Unlike other types of decision in which the final determination comes easily because the alternative drops out (entirely or mostly) of consciousness, this feeling of effort takes place when the agent is well aware of the loss involved in the choice. It is in this sense “driving a thorn into one’s flesh” (II.534).

Just as most movements are done apart from the fiat, most human decisions are devoid of this feeling of effort. James knew this contradicted popular beliefs about volition, and reiterated the point made earlier: “We are, I think, misled into supposing that effort is more frequent than it is, by the fact that *during deliberation* we so often have

a feeling of how great an effort it would take to make a decision *now*.” But the actual decision is usually quite easy after the deliberative process is completed. Despite the rarity of effortful decisions, James felt confident that on a phenomenological level, these decisions most certainly do exist. But consensus falls apart in terms of interpreting the meaning of these decisions. The implications of this question are enormous. “Questions as momentous as that of the very existence of spiritual causality, as vast as that of universal predestination or free-will, depend on its interpretation.” James thought it therefore crucial to understand “the conditions under which the feeling of volitional effort is found” (II.535).

The Feeling of Effort

James noted that “under ordinary circumstances” (II. 535) certain motives have a tendency to result in movement, while others have a tendency to fail to elicit movement. Among the ideas with the strongest tendency to move the will are “those that represent objects of passion, appetite, or emotion—objects of instinctive reaction, in short.” James also included “feelings or ideas of pleasure or of pain” in this category. The motives that typically fail to produce movement are those “foreign to the instinctive history of the race” such as “highly abstract conceptions” and “far-off considerations” (II.536). Among these considerations James would have placed the things of morality and religion.

Given the predilection of human nature to gratify the “instinctive” motives over the “abstract” ones, a remarkable and psychologically noteworthy event takes place when the abstract motives actually do produce movement. Yet, given the inherent feeble and weak tendency of these motives something needs to be *added to* them. This is where effort comes in. Whenever these higher but unnatural motives prevail it is only “*with*

effort.” James here seems to repeat Upham’s notion that the will arbitrates between “natural” and “moral” sensibilities. Yet the enormous difference is that James saw this conflict as occurring rarely. Upham built the psychic conflict into his system (although he did, of course, say that the ideal case is when the two major types of sensibility are in harmony). Indeed, then, the sphere of the self-determined will had shrunk considerably.

James thought that a healthy will was characterized by a proper balance or “ratio” of impulsive and inhibitive motives to action. In the special case of decisions made promptly, the healthy will still makes “a sort of preliminary survey of the field” (II.536), taking into account all motives, and developing a proper “vision” of the situation at hand. A will can be “unhealthy” in several ways. The way that concerned James most was when the ratio of “impulsive and inhibitive forces” is “distorted.” In some cases the impulsive forces prevail (through strong positive impulses or weak opposing impulses), creating an “explosive will,” and in other cases the inhibitive forces prevail (through weak positive impulses or strong opposing impulses), creating an “obstructed will.” The explosive will belongs to “a normal type of character” (II.537) in whom impulsive forces seem to arise before the inhibitory forces can prevent the action. James thought this kind of will belonged to the “‘dare-veil’ and ‘mercurial’ temperaments’ so commonly found in ‘the Latin and Celtic races’” (II.538). Although these people may seem to be “monkeys” to “us,” “we” appear “reptilian” to them. In other words, an explosive will is not always a bad thing, since this type of character can actually accomplish a great deal, propelled along with their energetic powers of volition. In this context, James discussed things such as “disorderly and impulsive conduct” (II.542) addictions and “the passion of love,” (II.543), and what would call today obsessive compulsive symptomatology (II.545).

The Obstructed Will

Given James's historical context and well as his interest in the variety and plurality of the human condition, it is not surprising that he pays closer attention to different "types" of will than Upham. Although this pluralistic impulse is a very important part of James's approach to psychology and therefore an important key in interpreting James, a careful consideration of James's understanding of individual differences between "types" of will is not entirely relevant to the topic at hand. That said, James's discussion of "the obstructed will" is relevant, because here James deals with issues of concern to Ames, Edwards and Upham.

Whereas the "explosive will" has to do with people whose impulses are too strong or their inhibitions too weak, the "obstructed will" is found in individuals with weak impulses or strong inhibitions. Although it is normal that certain objects will "fail to touch the quick or break the skin" in all of us, this is the default setting for a person with an obstructed will.

James portrayed the obstructed will as a moral condition. In the healthy state of will, James reminded his readers, the vision is right and the will follows its lead. But in this case, the intellect may possess a crystal-clear idea of what to do, yet the act does not follow. James used the quote from Ovid, "*video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*" [I see the better course, but I do the worse] in a way similar to Upham, to describe a pathological condition. Recall that the Puritan authors thought this quote an apt description of their own experience and of human nature in general. So, from the perspective of Ames and Edwards, such a use of this phrase would be a pathologizing of

sin; ascribing normal human moral weakness to a pitiful few, and, by implication, considering the rest a moral majority.

James quote of Guislain is another illustration of how the obstruction of will was seen in moral terms, and of the continuity of the voluntarist vs. intellectualist notions which had for centuries characterized theory concerning human volition. These patients, Gaislain wrote “are able to will inwardly, mentally, according to the dictates of reasoning. They experience the desire to act, but they are powerless to act as they should.” The idea that the will follows the “dictates of reasoning” is analogous to the old “intellectualist” position on the will. Gaislain’s position seems to imply that departure from the intellectualist will is an anomaly.

Although James, like Upham, seemed to conceive of the obstructed will as a special case of pathology, he did seem to identify with this condition in a way that Upham did not. Here again is what I have called the “Augustinian strain of piety” found in James, and is typical of the tension between secularized “Calvinist” and “Arminian” impulses. He recalled his discussion in his chapter on the perception of reality that objects which have most “efficacy as a stimulus to the will” are perceived to be most real to the agent. On the other hand, objects which “fail to *get to* the will, fail to draw blood” (II.547) appear unreal. James expressed his “Augustinian” impulses thus: “the moral tragedy in human life comes almost wholly from the fact that the link is ruptured which normally should hold between vision of the truth and action, and that this pungent sense of effective reality will not attach to certain ideas” (II.547). In the next sentence, however, James seems to have abandoned this Calvinistic sentiment to embrace the more self-righteous idea that this “moral tragedy in human life” really applies to someone else:

Men do not differ so much in their mere feelings and conceptions. Their notions of possibility and their ideals are not as far apart as might be argued from their differing fates. No class of them have better sentiments or feel more constantly the difference between the higher and the lower path in life than the hopeless failures, the sentimentalists, the drunkards, the schemers, the 'dead-beats,' whose life is one long contradiction between knowledge and action, and who, with full command of theory, never get to holding their limp characters erect. (II.547)

These poor sinners certainly possess "moral knowledge," but this knowledge "never wholly resolves, never gets its voice out of the minor into the major key." Yet, again, James seemed to speak from experience when he said, "...the consciousness of inward hollowness that accrues from habitually seeing the better only to do the worse, is one of the saddest feelings one can bear with him through this vale of tears" (II.547-548).

A Formula for Willpower

Having discussed the tendency for instinctive impulses to dominate ideal impulses, and the varieties of "unhealthiness of will," James thought the stage properly set: "We now see at one view when it is that effort complicates volition." Effort comes to the rescue in precisely these conditions. Recalling Edwards' comments on the moral necessity of the will of God, Christ, and the angels, James noted that "the child of the sunshine" has little need of effort in order to walk the proper path in life. Instead, it is "the hero and the neurotic" that need to make Herculean efforts to overcome their native and destructive predispositions.

On a phenomenological level, people think of effort as "an active force adding its strength to that of the motives which ultimately prevail." James is arguing here, like

Upham, that the will must act in view of motives, but is not determined by them. The process is not deterministic like the way “outer forces impinge on a body” producing motion according to the “line of least resistance, or of greatest traction.” Seemingly critical of the notion that the strongest motive always prevails, James noted that if the line of least resistance is simply *defined* as the path finally followed, one cannot argue with it. Yet, James seemed to imply that not much is gained from such definitional gymnastics (Upham made the same argument in 1834). It is the phenomenology that matters, James insisted, and the [purportedly universal] phenomenology is of weaker motives prevailing over strong ones through the additional strength of effort: “But we *feel*, in all hard cases of volition, as if the line taken, when the rarer and more ideal motives prevail, were the line of greater resistance, and as if the line of coarser motivation were the more pervious and easy one, even at the moment when we refuse to follow it” (II.548). James was an “Arminian” indeed.

Just as he pathologized the tendency to “see the better and do the worse,” James here also by implication laid the moral blame on these sinners for their lack of willpower. The fact that it is the instinctive impulses that require effortful resistance is evidenced by the fact that “...the sluggard, the drunkard, the coward, never talk of their conduct...[as an effort to] overcome their sobriety, conquer their courage, and so forth” (II.548). Instead, “the sensualist” experiences a lack of effort—a failure to live up to his “ideals” and sense of “duty.” Since James never talked about individual differences in amount of available ‘effort-power,’ we can infer that he thought that all people are given this ability to overcome their strongest motives and that the blame for failures to overcome could be laid upon the shoulders of the “sluggards” of this world for their unwillingness to utilize

their native psychological resources. Whatever moral criticisms have been historically levied against the theologies of Ames and Edwards, it is the “Arminian” notion of self-determination found in Upham and James that actually seems more likely to create an environment of victim-blaming and finger-pointing.

Despite the potential for self-righteousness, James’s psychology also seems to have a secular notion of original sin that is lacking in the psychology of Thomas Upham. James repeatedly argues that the instinctive impulses are naturally stronger than the ideal impulses. In other words, human beings are by nature inclined to be selfish. One may easily see how his fondness for a Darwinistic view of people may have contributed to this perspective. What is less clear is why James thought “ideal impulse[s]” arise in the first place. Nevertheless, he took these ideal impulses for granted, and saw them as the basis for the moral life. Moral action was therefore *defined* as “*action against the line of the greatest resistance,*” i.e., action against powerful and instinctive impulses. This moral action is only possible through the combination of ideal impulses and effort. When these ideal impulses (“I”) inexplicably appear in consciousness they are inevitably comparatively weak relative to the instinctive “propensities” (“P”). James put this truth in a formula: “*I per se < P,*” that is, ideal impulses are by themselves necessarily weaker than instinctive propensities. But effort (“E”) when added to the ideal impulses creates a situation when the line of greatest resistance is overcome: “*I + E > P*” (II.549).

James closed this section of the Principles with a summary that confirms his belief in the universal availability of people to exercise “effort,” as well as the indeterminate nature of this effort:

But the E does not seem to form an integral part of the I. It appears adventitious and indeterminate in advance. We can make more or less as we please, and *if* we make enough we can convert the greatest mental resistance into the least. Such, at least, is the impression which the facts spontaneously produce upon us.

Here one may recall Edward's criticism of Arminian writers for positing a purportedly universal experience of indeterministic freedom of choice. Here James does the same thing, using the universal "us" to describe the possession of this "Arminian" experience.

Pleasure and Pain as Springs of Action

In the next section of the Principles, James attempted to dismantle the idea that pleasure and pain are the only "springs of action." On the surface of things this is not surprising for the indeterminist James, given that this notion tended to be associated with strongly deterministic varieties of psychology. On a deeper level we find James here not trying to reject the hedonic assumption because it is deterministic, but because it did not fit the psychological data as James saw it.

James did not deny the power that pleasure and pain possess as impulses to action. He simply thought that they were responsible for only a small segment of human behavior. His opinion in this matter was shaped by the fact that he conceived of the hedonic assumption as positing that pleasure and pain are the *objects* of action (a conception I don't think all hedonic psychologists would embrace). Therefore, since human beings frequently act without "the thought of pleasure" (II.552) or "mental reference to pleasure and pain" or "represented pleasure" (II.553), we may conclude that pleasure and pain are not the only springs of activity. This way of interpreting hedonic psychology is consistent with his belief that *ideas* are always the springboard to

movement. If pleasure or pain is to lead to movement, it must therefore do so through the ideational route. In this sense, James's refutation makes great sense.

Still, James recognized that pleasure and pain are intimately connected to our voluntary activities. To illustrate this point he gave the example of frustrated impulses, such as the impulse to breath. Although we do not obviously pursue pleasure while breathing, we are very pleased and relieved when we are able to catch our breath after a period of forced respiratory restriction. By extension, it is true that "round all our impulses, merely as such, there twine, as it were, secondary possibilities of pleasant and painful feeling..." Further, we experience pleasure when we reach our goals, and pain when they are frustrated. Even more, although we may not be explicitly pursuing pleasure in a given act, "the act itself may be the *pleasantest line* of conduct when once the impulse has begun." The distinction was between "...a *pleasant act* and an act *pursuing a pleasure*" (II.556). Perhaps that is all the hedonist is saying. If so, then James's psychology is once again surprisingly deterministic. James's belief that the word "*interest*" could be used as "a single name" describing the thing that constitutes "the impulsive and inhibitive quality of objects" further shows how comfortable James was with deterministic mechanisms of behavior. As he had argued in his chapter on the perception of reality, this interest is "the *urgency* [of an idea]...*with which it is able to compel attention and dominate in consciousness.*" James never argued that this interest could be freely chosen. Still, because "the mere thinking of reasons to the contrary" can act as a check upon this impulsive process, James held out hope for the freedom that his own psychology seemed to jeopardize.

Will as a *Particular* Relation Between the Mind and its 'Ideas'

Earlier in this chapter it was noted that James seemed a bit unclear concerning his definition of volition. He admitted to some confusion as to whether he should consider ideo-motor action volitional, and at that point least temporarily appeared to embrace ideo-motor action as volitional. In his section "Will is a Relation Between the Mind and its 'Ideas,'" James finally offered the crucial clarification. He began this section indicating that he was finally "closing...all these preliminaries" and finally moving toward a discussion of "the more *intimate* nature of the volitional process" (II.559). Perhaps we can consider his indecision regarding the status of ideo-motor action as being due to the fact that it is a *less* "intimate" species of volitional activity.

"The *psychology* of volition properly stops" when the motive idea finally prevails. Prior to an act of will it is possible for the inhibitory and impulsive motives to conflict with each other. The motive idea prevails at the moment that movement ensues. Once the movements begin, we leave the domain of psychology and enter into physiology. "In a word, volition is a psychic or moral fact pure and simple, and is absolutely completed when the stable state of the idea is there. The supervision of motion is a supernumerary phenomenon depending on executive ganglia whose function lies outside the mind" (II.560). The phrase "psychic or moral fact" is reminiscent of Edwards' contention that volition is concerned with "moral causes," i.e., inclinations and desires, as opposed to "natural causes." It appears that both James and Edwards saw volition as a psychological and moral process. James illustrated this distinction between volition and its outward manifestations through examples of various pathologies in which volition remains intact, but the physiological correlates are disordered. For example, the aphasiac "has an

image” (II.560) of the words he desires to speak, but is shocked at what actually proceeds from his mouth. The fact that the aphasiac may feel rage or discouragement is proof that his will remains “intact” (II.561). James then comes to a reasonable conclusion: “We thus find that *we reach the heart of our inquiry into volition when we ask by what process it is that the thought of any given object comes to prevail stably in the mind.*”

This conclusion does not say quite enough, however, because James did not believe volition was *simply* a matter of an object coming to “prevail stably in the mind.” He had discussed examples of prevalence elsewhere: “where thoughts prevail without effort, we have sufficiently studied in the several chapters on sensation, association, and attention, the laws of their advent before consciousness and of their stay.” Therefore, the “heart of our inquiry” into volition has to do with *more* than simply a motive thought prevailing in consciousness. So it is in the next several sentences that James reveals the true heart of his psychology of volition:

Where, on the other hand, the prevalence of the thought is accompanied by the phenomenon of effort, the case is much less clear. Already in the chapter on attention we postponed the final consideration of voluntary attention with effort to a later place. We have now brought things to a point at which we see that attention with effort is all that any case of volition implies. *The essential achievement of the will, in short, when it is most ‘voluntary,’ is to ATTEND to a difficult object and hold it fast before the mind.* The so-doing is the *fiat*; and it is a mere physiological incident that when the object is thus attended to, immediate motor consequences should ensue. (II.561)

For James, then, as we might have suspected, it is really that fifth, effortful, “type of decision” that really constitutes the activity of will, that is the *true* “fiat.” All of the other *effortless* activities may approximate volition, but remain, still, automatic and therefore outside of the true domain of the Arminian will. James’s clearest statement follows shortly after the comments quoted above: “*Effort of attention is thus the essential phenomenon of will.*” True to American and Arminian form, James thought it obvious that “every reader must know by his own experience that this is so....” Although this comment may not have been true in the days of Edwards, it was perhaps commonplace in James’s America to define the will in these narrow terms, as the effortful choice to do the right thing in the face of temptation.

James’s description of the activity of the effortful will, then, might be taken as perhaps the best description of what the will had really become in late nineteenth-century American thought. This activity takes place when the agent is in “some fiery passion’s grasp” (II.562). James lays out the scenario in eerily Edwardsean-sounding terms. There is no “physical difficulty” in doing the right thing when the fiery passion takes hold (a very Edwardsean comment, indicating that the agent possessed natural ability to do the right thing). Still, there is great “mental” difficulty. Or as Edwards would say, “moral” difficulty, i.e., a lack of inclination to do the good: when in the grip of passion, “the tendency is for no images but such as are congruous with it to come up” (II.563). The tendency of the mind in such a state is to resist all reasonable suggestions, which seem like a “cold-water bath” a “minister of death” and a “corpse-like finger.”

It is, however, “the strong-willed man” who embraces the voice of reason, who “hears the still small voice unflinchingly, and who, when the death-bringing

consideration [i.e., the weak but moral voice of reason] comes, looks at its face, consents to its presence, clings to it, affirms it, and holds it fast, in spite of the host of exciting mental images which rise in revolt against it and would expel it from the mind” (II.563). As this “difficult object” is “by a resolute effort” held before the mind, it grows in its impulsive power until the object takes possession of the mind. At that point the victory is won, and the virtuous motor effects follow automatically.

Reiterating the point made earlier, James reminded his readers that “this strain of attention is the fundamental act of will” (II.564). Since “the whole drama is a mental drama” (II.564), James put the issue in terms that could serve as a moral guidepost, and a scientific sanctioning of “Arminian” moral striving. The basic point that the earnest moral striver needed to embrace was that “the saving moral act” (II.565) is to keep the difficult and non-instinctual idea before the mind until it begins to have a motor effect. “The idea to be consented to must be kept from flickering and going out. It must be held steadily before the mind until it *fills* the mind.” The will is to hold the idea in the mind until the mind consents to its presence: “Consent to the idea’s undivided presence, this is effort’s sole achievement” (II.564).

This consent is hard won, and people would prefer to follow their impulses. James referred back to the case of the “reasonable type of decision” (described above). Usually, movement follows effortlessly once the “right conception” is ascertained (which reinforces the idea that the will is not in its most fundamental sense involved in this “type of decision” *because* it is effortless). When the right conception is “anti-impulsive,” what usually follows is a process of rationalization in which “the whole intellectual ingenuity of the man...goes to work to crowd it out of sight, and to find names for the

emergency, by the help of which the dispositions of the moment may sound sanctified, and sloth or passion may reign unchecked” (II.565). Surely James did not have a rosy view of human nature. How much stronger, then, is the desire of “the drunkard” to utilize his “intellectual ingenuity” to resist the ideal suggestions of reason. When the temptation to drink comes, he would rather call that condition anything but “*being a drunkard:*”

It is a new brand of liquor which the interests of intellectual culture in such matters oblige him to test; moreover it is poured out and it is sin to waste it; or others are drinking and it would be churlishness to refuse; or it is but to enable him to sleep, or just to get through this job of work; or it isn’t drinking, it is because he feels so cold; or it is Christmas-day; or it is a means of stimulating him to make a more powerful resolution in favor of abstinence than any he has hitherto made; or it is just this once, and once doesn’t count, etc., etc., *ad libitum*... (II.565)

Yet if the moral drama of the failure to resist temptation is a mental drama, so too is the moral drama of temptation conquered a moral drama. Although the “drunkard’s” entire being seems to resist the conception that he actually *is* a drunkard, his fortunes will change *if* he only begins to actually embrace *that* conception. If he “unwaveringly” holds that difficult conception before the mind until the mind submits (or “consents”) to it, “he is not likely to remain [a drunkard] long.” This intellectual effort is therefore truly “his saving moral act” (II.565). And this moral principle applies not only to the drunkard, but to all people, and all morally challenging situations. “*To sustain a representation, to think*, is, in short, the only moral act, for the impulsive and the obstructed, for sane and

lunatics alike.” If one is to become a moral victor, one must learn to say of those “objects naturally so insipid,” “Let these alone be my reality!” (II.566). James took it for granted that people would actually want to struggle so intensely for such objects.

Before moving on to the topic of the freedom of the will, James made a few comments on the “consent” of the will. James summarized the preceding considerations by arguing that “the only inward volitional act which we ever perform” (II.567) is to attend to resistant and difficult ideas. James confessed that he put the matter “in this ultra-simple way” because he desired “more than anything else” (II.567) to show that will is not a relation between the self and some “extra-mental matter” but rather a relation “between our Self and our own states of mind” (II.568).

James also wanted to qualify what he said about the will as consisting in attending to difficult objects. The only reason attention is so critical is that it is necessary in order to cause the mind to “consent” to the reality of the object. When attention is total, i.e., when no other idea is present to consciousness to create inhibition, consent necessarily follows, and, consequently, so too does movement. If attention is not total, i.e., when competing ideas have not yet vanished, it is still possible for the mind to consent to the idea. This is precisely that which distinguishes the “fifth type” of decision from all the others. Yet there are cases in which the attention may bring the mind to the point of volition, but the mind shrinks back from executing the movement in question. That is, the mind still does not “consent” to the idea. In this case additional effort is needed to overcome the “hesitation.” James concluded: “So that although attention is the first and fundamental thing in volition, *express consent to the reality of what is attended to* is often an additional and quite distinct phenomenon involved.” Sounding much like Upham

whenever he approached an indefinable “simple idea,” James confessed to being unable to define this consent. It is that experience which we have when we inwardly say, “*let it be a reality*” (II.569).

The Freedom of the Will (From the Scrutiny of Science)³¹

James began his discussion of free will with a rather complex discussion of the nature of the object and the “dynamic power” of thought. Concerning the object, James reiterated points made in Volume I about the complex and ever-changing object of thought. “Ideas” from the perspective of the psychologist are not separate entities at war with each other, but are rather “parts of the total *object* of representation” (II.569). Prior to decision, the object is characterized by the impulsive and inhibitory ideas discussed above. Yet at the moment of decision, the object had changed in such a way that this tension is sufficiently resolved. The resolution may be “hard” when effort is involved, or

³¹ James did not finish his chapter on the will with a consideration of the will’s freedom. Instead he appended a consideration of “the education of the will” which is striking for its lack of continuity with the section immediately preceded by it.

Further confirming the fact that James saw the will as a moral faculty, James defined the education of the will as “the whole of one’s training to moral and prudential conduct,” but also included the broader issues of “adapt[ing] means to ends, involving the ‘association of ideas,’ in all its varieties and complications, together with the power of inhibiting impulses irrelevant to the ends desired, and of initiating movements contributory thereto.” James’ “narrow” goal in this section was to consider these “powers” of inhibition and initiation.

“Since a willed movement is a movement preceded by an idea of itself, the problem of the will’s education is the problem of how the idea of movement can arouse the movement itself” (II.580). James reminded his readers that the activity of the will is always “secondary,” i.e., dependent upon previously involuntary actions the ideas of which are stored in memory and become the basis for future possible activities. To clarify this distinction, James explained that “on the movement’s original occurrence the motor discharge came first and the sensory process second; now in the voluntary repetition the sensory process (excited in weak or ‘ideational’ form) comes first, and the motor discharge comes second.” In this section of the *Principles*, James aimed to explain “how this comes to pass,” which “would be to answer the problem of the education of the will *in physiological terms*” (II.580).

Throughout the *Principles*, James maintained a strict distinction between the physiological and the psychological, usually trying to limit his discussions to the psychological. It is interesting here, however, that James breaks this rule and enters into what he eleven pages later confessed to being “protracted physiological speculations” (II.591). Perhaps James thought that his section on the freedom of the will was a bit too ethical to receive the last word in a scientific textbook on psychology. Surely his section on the education on the will, complete with technical diagrams and careful attention to the niceties of physiology, would make up for his pietistic digression. Yet, since this dissertation concerns itself more with the “theological” aspects of James’ work, his “physiological speculations” do not add very much to this work. I will not, therefore, attempt to summarize these speculations. For such a summary see Woodward, 1984.

easy, when the requisite changes in thought occur without effort. We will quickly return to this “total object of representation” in a moment. First, we shall quickly address James’s thoughts concerning the power of thought.

James probably thought it necessary to address contemporary questions about the “dynamic power” of thought, i.e., the ability of thoughts to influence other thoughts and to produce movements, because the question of the freedom of the will, particularly as James understood it, makes no sense apart from the belief that thought has this ability. James thought that most psychologists were comfortable with the existence of thought, yet some doubted its power. If we admit that thought exists, however, we should accept these thoughts for what they appear to be, i.e., “things...that supervene upon each other, sometimes with effort and sometimes with ease...” (II.571). This defense of the efficacy of thought is reminiscent of James’s arguments in his chapter on the automaton theory (see chapter 10) and is indeed relevant to the loss of will in American psychology. If psychologists would continue to harbor doubts of about the importance and power of thought, certainly the role and even the reality of the will would be included in these doubts.

With these qualifications in place, James was able to finally frame the free will issue. Consistent with the contention that effortful striving is the fundamental act of will, the freedom of the will problem also deals exclusively with the nature of this effortful activity. The question is, simply, “Is the effort where it exists a fixed function of the *object* [of representation]...or is it such an independent ‘variable’ that with a constant object more or less of it may be made?” (II.571). James thought that the effort (which is, remember, the fundamental act of will) “appears to us indeterminate,” (relying once again

on the ambiguous “us.”) If this experience of indeterminism is authentic, then human activity is “unpredestinate” and free. In addition to the theological language (of predestination) employed here, James defines freedom like Upham, in libertarian terms. He also relies on introspective evidence to substantiate his belief in such freedom. Unlike Upham, however, James does not even try to engage or refute the compatibilist notion of freedom (i.e., the notion possessed by Ames and Edwards).

James put forward some of the arguments that Upham used in defense of the idea that “we” experience libertarian freedom. For example, the fact of remorse implies that we could have done otherwise. The limitations of scientific methods are also utilized to advance the cause of libertarian freedom. Since it is impossible to take the “measurements” necessary to solve the freedom of the will, one must fall back on “the crude evidences of introspection...” Still, James admitted that human beings are liable to believe that they could have done otherwise even in those “*effortless* volitions” that are certainly “mechanically determined.” If we are deluded in this case (which is the *majority* of “volitions,” after all), then “why is it not a delusion everywhere?” In the end, James thought the question to be “insoluble on strictly psychologic grounds” (II.572).

But there are pragmatic reasons to find a solution. Admittedly, some people do not feel any need to resolve the issue. They enjoy the debate, and look forward to gaining more and more knowledge about the topic in order to increase the sophistication of the discussion. “But if our speculative delight be less keen,” James conceded, and our need for *answers* is paramount, “then, taking the risk of error on our head, we must project upon one of the alternative views the attribute of reality for us; we must fill our mind with the idea of it that it becomes our settled creed.” It is commonly known that

James settled on the side of indeterminism, and that he did indeed fill his mind with this notion, particularly during his spiritual crisis in the 1860s.

Referring his readers to his essay “The Dilemma of Determinism” for a fuller explication of his views, James still explained some of his basic reasons for embracing indeterminism and rejecting determinism. Contrary to Edwards, and consistent with the “Arminians” Edwards had tried to refute, James framed the “logic” of the issue in such a way that indeterminism is the only *moral* option in the debate. “The most that any argument can do for determinism is to make it a clear and seductive conception, which a man is foolish not to espouse, so long as he stands by the great scientific postulate that the world must be one unbroken fact, and that the prediction of all things without exception must be ideally, even if not actually, possible” (II.573). Determinism, as a “seductive conception,” is clearly portrayed as an idea which allures people into an immoral stance. Further, since determinism is portrayed as a “scientific postulate” which allows for perfect prediction of future events, James’s definition excludes the very kind of determinism that Ames and Edwards had espoused—a divine determination of all things which is *not* perfectly predictable because God works not only through lawful “secondary causes,” but also miracles. If James’s argument reflects contemporary sentiments, the fact that *naturalism* is portrayed as “the most that any argument can do for determinism” shows that the Calvinistic universe had by this time been thoroughly rejected in scientific quarters. The irony of this rejection is that *it* may have been the only resource (theological resource, at least) for marrying determinism to morality. Indeed, Edwards had argued that between Calvinism and Arminianism, only the divinely

determined universe of the Calvinists could sustain and make sense of morality *at all*. Such a possibility does not appear to be on James's radar screen.

Instead, James, like the Arminians before him, argued that indeterminism is *requisite* to morality. As opposed to the "seductive" but destructive postulate of determinism, indeterminism is understood as "a *moral* postulate about the Universe, the postulate that *what ought to be can be, and that bad acts cannot be fated, but that good ones must be possible in their place*" (II.573). Although philosophers and theologians (like Edwards) may have taken such a statement to task on logical grounds (Is it possible for an act to be "bad" or "good" *without* being morally necessary? Can possibility be necessary?), James insisted that the "scientific and moral postulates" are engaged in irresolvable war because there is no "objective proof" to settle the issue once and for all. By avoiding these logical questions, James failed to address the *moral* challenge to indeterminism posed not only by Edwards, but by contemporary ethicists (see below).

Still, James's arguments make sense, "if indeterminism be a fact" (II.573). If indeed the universe (and therefore also the will) is free in the libertarian sense, "it would seem only fitting that the belief in its indetermination should be voluntarily chosen from amongst other possible beliefs." Believing in, submitting to, the reality of free will should therefore be "Freedom's first deed" (II.573).

James was particularly critical of what he called the "*fatalistic argument* for determinism." James contrasted this fatalistic argument with existential despair or "fatalism," which can look similar to and even utilize the language of fatalism. "When a man has let himself go time after time," (apparently referring to the condition of the obstructed will which sees the good but does the bad), "he easily becomes impressed"

with the enormous variety of factors which determine his behavior. (Although Ames and Edwards might have said that this sort of situation may prepare a soul to concede his moral powerlessness and embrace God, James thought that one must never relinquish the belief of a native source of power and effort). The obstructed person gradually begins to say, “all is fate...it is hopeless to resist the drift, vain to look for any new force coming in; and less, perhaps, than anywhere else under the sun is there anything really mine in the decisions which I make” (II.574). Yet, at this point, the person has not yet fully affirmed a full and genuine determinism. It isn’t that they deny the reality of effort so defined, they just sense its “*impotence*” to effect the desired moral results. Yet this very groaning consciousness of the shortcomings of effort affirms that one has hopes for its possibilities as an “independent power.”

James contrasted this condition of faltering faith with “genuine determinism,” which feels “not the *impotence* but the *unthinkability* of free-will” (II.574). Although determinism affirms that the feeling of effort “which seems to breast the tide” certainly exists, it further affirms that this feeling is only “a *portion of the tide*.” The idea that “effort” can exist as an “absolutely independent variable” is nonsense to this frame of mind. “The variations of effort cannot be independent...they cannot originate *ex nihilo*, or come from a fourth dimension; they are mathematically fixed functions of the ideas themselves, which are the tide” (II.574). The phrase “fourth dimension” would seem to be consistent with the approach of Ames and Edwards, if we conceive of God as the fourth dimension. Yet James seems to consistently portray indeterministic effort as something that has its source in the self. Perhaps he thought of the self as possessing some fourth dimension. As we will see below, James probably would have considered

characterizing his psychology of volition as effort *ex nihilo* a caricature of his true system.

James did not deny the parsimony of some deterministic formulations and neither did he exclude all determinism from effortful choice. James began by noting how difficult it is to draw the line between determined and non-determined events. Indeterministic “decisions with effort merge so gradually into those [determined decisions] without it [i.e., effort] that it is not easy to say where the limit lies.” Further, the lines between effortless decision and ideo-motor action, and between ideo-motor action and reflexive action are vague. The deterministic case is further strengthened by the fact that the “machinery of association” is responsible for the ideas that are “brought before the mind” in both determined and undetermined action. The temptation, then, is to be parsimonious and simply consider all things under the deterministic umbrella.

Along these lines, James was particularly impressed with the formulations of “Professor Lipps,” who thought of effort not as an exertion of force, but as “a sign that force is lost” (II.575). In Lipps’ words, “...effort and counter-effort signify only what causes are mutually robbing each other of effectiveness” (II.575). We think of the stronger ideas as the effort, and the weaker ideas as the counter-effort, but the “identification of our *self*” with one of these clusters is really an arbitrary “illusion” (II.576). These arguments were strong enough for James to conclude, “I do not see how anyone can fail...to recognize the fascinating simplicity of some such view as his.” Neither was James entirely threatened by such a formulation: “Nor do I see why *for scientific purposes* one need give [this formulation] up even if indeterminate amounts of effort really do occur.” It is here that James laid down the Arminian gauntlet, a

proposition whose implications seem wide and deep: “Before their indeterminism, science simply *stops*.” That is, science has no access to the most fundamental act of the human will. Psychology had just lost its will.

To support this strict separation between science and effort, James made some comments about the limits of science that would have pleased Ames, Edwards, and Upham:

Psychology will be Psychology, and Science Science, as much as ever (as much and no more) in this world, whether free-will be true in it or not. Science, however, must be constantly reminded that her purposes are not the only purposes, and that the order of uniform causation which she has use for, and is therefore right in postulating, may be enveloped in a wider order, on which she has no claims at all. (II.576)

Declaring the limits of science and reason had been a common practice of pious natural philosophers since the Scientific Revolution (e.g., Wojcik, 1997), and so James places himself here within that tradition of religious thinkers. Still, it is significant that the “wider order” for James had some serious limitations imposed upon it. The wider order for James could not include any foreordination or predetermination. The wider order could not therefore include the God of Ames and Edwards. The only deity that this wider order would allow was a deity like Upham’s, who, “...in giving man the mighty and crowning power of the will,” gave to man “...a power which He could not violate.” (Upham, 1869, II.248).

Feeling at liberty, then, to “leave the free-will question altogether out of our account,” James closed his section on free-will with a helpful and revealing definition of

free will, a criticism of the critics of free will, and what amounts to a two-page sermon identifying “our worth as men” (II.579) with the efforts of our wills. First, the definition of free will. Reiterating a point made in Chapter IV, James summarized his position on “free effort.” If free will exists, this freedom “...could *only* be to hold some one ideal object, or part of an object, a little longer or a little more intensely before the mind” (II.576, *italic mine*). I italicize the word “only” here to show how much of the will *insofar as the will may be considered a moral category* had already been depleted in its sphere and status. From its original stature as a broad and imprecise term signifying that the entirety of humanity’s “active powers” are of a moral significance given by God, the term will (again, considered as a moral category) had in James’s mind come to signify a comparatively tiny sphere of human activity deriving its moral significance from itself.

James’s criticism of the critics of determinism is directly related to Edwards’ criticisms of Arminianism. Freedom consists in the will’s holding “some one ideal object, or part of an object” before the mind a bit longer than another (probably instinctual) part of the object. The freedom of this will is *limited* by the object immediately present to the mind. “Amongst the alternatives which present themselves as *genuine possibles*, it would thus make one effective.” Again, these “genuine possibles” are limited by the complex object before the mind. As James might have said, if the complex object is for example eating-or-not-eating-a-cookie-that-will-delight-the-palate-but-will-add-fat-and-will-bring-condemnation-from-certain-on-lookers, the agent is not free to go for a drive. That possibility is not contained in the object. But certainly eating the cookie is a possibility, as is not eating the cookie. James thought that this crucial distinction between “the possibles which really tempt a man and those which tempt him

not at all” (II.577) was the distinction that at least some determinists failed to make in their critiques. To illustrate the point James included a lengthy quote from “John Fiske’s Cosmic Philosophy,” in which Fiske argues that indeterminism prohibits the framing of *any* “theory of human actions whatever” (II.577). If behavior is free in an indeterminist sense, then we ought never be surprised when “a mother...strangle[[s] her first-born child” or “the miser may cast his long-treasured gold into the seas...” (II.577). Further, if indeterminism be true, “the cardinal principles of ethics” are destroyed.

There are indeed similarities between the argumentation of Edwards and Fiske on this point, particularly the concern with the “cardinal principles of ethics.” The insistence of Arminians that motives always occasion an act of will is also made more intelligible in light of James’s comments. Yet, a question that James does not address here is the criticism that Edwards levied against Whitby, that the very notion of motives loses its coherency when the strength of motives is made irrelevant to the actual volitional outcome. So, while James was arguing that the “Arminian” doctrine of motives *does* limit volitional options (and is therefore meaningful), Edwards argument perhaps still has life in it: that motive strength is rendered rather meaningless.

Finally, James closed his section on free will with a sermonic discourse aimed, perhaps, to encourage those poor obstructed souls who had given up hope in their own efficiency. The topic of this section was “...the extraordinarily intimate and important character which the phenomenon of effort assumes in our own eyes as individual men” (II.578). As such, this section also perhaps tells us quite a bit about the “Arminian” moral sentiments that characterized the late nineteenth century.

“...We measure ourselves by many standards.” “Strength,” “intelligence,” and “wealth” are among these standards. But at root, the most important thing we bring to life, the “deeper” standard which is “able to suffice” without these other accoutrements, “is the sense of the amount of effort which we can put forth.” Unlike the outward trappings of wealth and success, “effort seems to belong to an altogether different realm, as if it were the substantive thing which we *are*...” (II.578). Our very identity is tied to the effort we put forth.

Perhaps human “worth” (II.579) is tied to individual effort because “the purpose of this human drama” may very well be “the ‘searching of our heart and reins,’” i.e., the end is ourselves. Given this over-arching purpose, our individual purposes terminate in ourselves, i.e., in “what effort we can make.” These purposes provide a framework in which useful and useless individuals may be differentiated: “He who can make none [i.e., no effort] is but a shadow; he who can make much is a hero.” The world around us “tests” us in many ways, and our worth as people depends upon how well we meet the challenge. “When a dreadful object is presented, or when life as a whole turns up its dark abysses to our view, then the worthless ones among us lose their hold on the situation altogether...” These “worthless ones” in James’s thought seem to be the sole repository of what Edwards called ‘moral inability,’ “The effort required for facing and consenting to such objects is beyond their power to make.” Thankfully, the world has its share of heroes, and since “...the heroic mind does differently,” the world may also have hope. The heroic mind faces the difficulties of life without falling away. “The world thus finds in the heroic man its worthy match and mate; and the effort which he is able to put forth to hold himself erect and keep his heart unshaken is the direct measure of his worth and

function in the game of human life” (II.578-579). The heroic man “can *stand*” while “his weaker brethren” are laid low.

Although this pietistic ethic may have been extremely individualistic, James thought that the heroic man is the one who will make the biggest impact on the world. Those who stay in the game authentically (the existentialism of this passage is striking) and do not hide in ““ostrich-like forgetfulness,”” those who face the difficulties of life squarely, are the ones who become “the masters and the lords of life” (II.579). These heroes live “on the perilous edge,” while the shadows avoid risk. The heroes set the example that the flocks follow.

Finally, effort is at the root of the religious and moral life. James thought that religious life in his day required a willingness to live “on the perilous edge” more than ever before. Perhaps he was here referring to the crumbling of the certitudes of Protestantism among intellectual elites. If so, the fact that human beings can no longer trust in a sovereign and efficient God to effect good in the world meant that “...not only our morality but our religion, so far as the latter is deliberate, depend on the effort which we can make. “*Will you or won't you have it so?*” is the most probing question we are ever asked; we are asked it every hour of the day...” We answer these questions not by words but by “*consents or non-consents*” (II.579).

Recall that Edwards had concluded The Freedom of the Will with a quote from 1 Corinthians, expressing the desire that “no flesh glory in his presence.” The quote was an expression of the Calvinist desire to proclaim God as the source of all efficiency and of all good. How differently does James conclude his writing on the freedom of the will,

proclaiming the power and the possibilities of the heroic, autonomous, efficient human will:

What wonder that these dumb responses [our “consents and non-consents” or acts of free will] should seem our deepest organs of communication with the nature of things! What wonder if the effort demanded by them be the measure of our worth as men! What wonder if the amount which we accord of it be the one *strictly undervived and original contribution* which we make to the world! (II.579, italics mine).

Summary and Conclusion

The chapter has dealt with those chapters which James subsumed under the term “the production of movement,” i.e. habit, emotion, and will. The vast majority of this chapter focused on the will. In this chapter I hoped to show along with Danziger (2001), that James had “intellectualist” leanings (i.e., that the will is determined by the intellect), and, that his prolonged discussion of the “feeling of innervation” was related to justifying this belief. I also argued that this “intellectualism” was related to his belief in the will’s freedom.

One of the most significant aspects of the chapter on will is James’s wavering concerning the status of ideo-motor actions, i.e. actions which follow automatically after the appropriate idea comes to mind. He similarly outlines five different types of “decision,” but, since four out of the five types of decision are the result of deterministic processes, James wonders about the voluntary status of these determined decisions. James’s “Arminian” sentiments are most clearly expressed when he affirms that the most essential act of will is the *effortful* and *undetermined* act, a species of the fifth “type of

decision.” And, since these acts are indeterminate, they do not even belong to the science of psychology. Although James did provide a framework for thinking of volitional processes from a deterministic standpoint, he simultaneously removed the topic of volition from psychology *insofar as will had been understood by “Arminians” to be a morally consequential idea*. Even before chapters on will had disappeared from psychology textbooks, American psychology had lost its (Arminian) will.³²

³² Some questions that remain, then, are: What kind of “will” remained in the American psychology textbooks that followed James? Did post-James New Psychology textbook writers also have “Arminian” sensibilities? To what extent did New Psychology chapters on will deal with moral issues? My own superficial analysis of post-Jamesian textbooks indicates that the New Psychology seemed to follow James in his insistence that “free will” cannot be studied by empirical psychology but that the broader (what I’ve called the “Edwardsean”) notion of will could be studied. Indeed, even the “Arminian” feeling of effort could continue to be studied, but only through Jamesian introspection. American mental philosophers like Upham sensed and boldly proclaimed the will’s libertarian freedom based upon their confident introspections. To contrast, the New Psychology, following James, would not be able to make any libertarian affirmations since introspection could never directly observe the conditions of free action. Although shorn of its Arminian glory, it is clear that the concept of will did retain some of its moral meaning in the New Psychology. I hope in future research to explore the contours of the remaining faculty, the nature of its moral meaning to the New Psychology, and how and why these vestiges were sustained for over a quarter-century in American psychology textbooks only to be (finally) “lost” in the 1930s.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation research began with a simple observation. The concept of will had been a dominant component of the moral psychology taught in American college textbooks for approximately three centuries. Even the self-consciously naturalistic “New Psychology” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had chapters on the topic. As one who had taught introductory psychology a few times in the twenty-first century, however, I was also well aware of the fact that contemporary psychology no longer speaks of will or volition with any discernable regularity. I wondered what had happened. Why did American psychology lose its concept of will?

The received history of American psychology conveyed in introductory textbooks suggested one answer. The introspective New Psychology (which was comfortable with inner psychological processes such as volition) was defeated by behaviorism (which insisted that a scientific psychology must study observable phenomena). Unobservable mental states, including volitions, would have to be removed from the picture.

Although there is certainly some truth to the received view, this dissertation took a broader view, examining textbooks used during the 300 or so years before behaviorism. The four textbooks, William Ames’s (1629) Marrow of Theology, Jonathan Edwards’ (1754) Freedom of the Will, Thomas C Upham’s (1869) Mental Philosophy, and William James’s (1890) Principles of Psychology, revealed that changes were underway in American psychological thought that had weakened the concept of will considerably—so much that William James felt compelled to remove the concept (insofar as the concept was of moral importance) from the purview of scientific psychology entirely. American

psychology had lost its will two decades before Watson's (1913) famous 'Behaviorist Manifesto' and some forty years before the heyday of behaviorism.

The analysis of texts in this dissertation is detailed, multifaceted, and difficult to reduce to only a few themes. Yet, for simplicity's sake, one might say that two "impulses" in American intellectual and institutional history can partially explain the loss of will. These are the "nonsectarian impulse" of American higher education, and the "Arminian impulse" in American moral psychology. The nonsectarian impulse is the decision among leaders in American higher education in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to deal with the problem of Protestant pluralism by taking a "lowest common denominator" approach to theological and/or moral truth. Since the idea of a faculty of will had emerged and been sustained in the context of sectarian theology, the evisceration of this theology also compromised the vitality and coherence of the faculty.

The "Arminian impulse" among moral psychologists is *not* the theological position of Dutch theologian Jacob Arminius, but rather the general tendency to believe that moral agency requires self-determination. In order for actions to be considered subject to moral judgment (i.e., "free"), they must not be the result of any force (or "efficiency") except one's own will. Although this position was meant to elevate the status of the will, it actually ended up diminishing its role. One of Thomas Upham's main contributions in this regard was to constrain the sphere of mental events that could be considered volitional. Inadvertently, the result of this maneuver may have been to shrink the moral side to human nature (e.g., the morality of the affections tended to be diminished) and to render the faculty of will a redundancy in certain circumstances (i.e., in circumstances in which there is no conflict between "natural desires" and "feelings of

moral obligation”). The Arminian impulse also permeates William James’s Principles of Psychology. In chapter after chapter James attempted to find evidence for non-derived efficiency in human actions. Most significantly, James argued that the faculty of the will (insofar as it was a morally consequential notion—i.e., as considered from the vantage point of ‘free will’) could be handed over to metaphysics. Since moral agency was an indeterministic process, American psychology (committed as it was to deterministic explanation) could no longer study human beings as moral agents.

An irony of all this, as I have noted above (following Graham Richards), is that American psychology is still highly moralistic in many of its incarnations. Fields such as developmental psychology and social psychology are infused with implicit and explicit moral messages. The thing that seems to be lacking in contemporary American psychology’s moral message, however, is that human beings are culpable or praiseworthy *moral agents*. Instead, we tend to view human beings as the products of several determinants: genetics, environmental influences, neurotransmitters, evolutionary adaptations, personality traits, attitudes, whatever. Guided as we are by “Arminian” assumptions, we assume (along with James) that determinism-talk somehow overrules or negates agency-talk. After all, we believe, a truly *moral* agent must be the self-determined cause of his or her actions.

So how might American psychology regain its ability to consider people as responsible moral agents? This is obviously a question of great complexity and a satisfactory answer is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Still, the nonsectarian and “Arminian” theses are relevant to this discussion.

Mainstream American psychologists are still moral/religious/political nonsectarians. Certainly psychologists are allowed to be scientific sectarians, participating within particular sub-disciplines in psychology, employing the methods and theoretical assumptions peculiar to that sub-discipline. But we assume that one's own moral, religious, or political convictions should not guide one's research. Likewise, one's own situatedness in moral, religious, or political communities should not influence one's research. Although very few arguably believe that this wall of separation is implemented very well (particularly in the more "moral" sub-disciplines like social psychology), the wall is still valued and diligently guarded. We do not want another's moral/religious/political agenda imposed upon us.

I would suggest that the fear of imposition of agendas is an outgrowth of the nonsectarian impulse. Since we need to keep our (often semi-conscious) 'agendas' hidden under the wraps of objective methodologies and value-neutral theories, there is good reason to go looking for subtle agendas. But suppose psychologists were actually encouraged to be *explicit* about their moral/religious/political convictions. Further, suppose they were encouraged to think deeply about the implications of these convictions for psychology. Further still, suppose American psychology began to embrace true diversity of moral/religious/political opinion and conceived of itself as a "marketplace of ideas" rather than an advocate for certain viewpoints which are assumed (by the powers that be) to be worthwhile. If this diversity were allowed, we might find that more robust and meaningful moral psychologies would develop (meaningful, of course, to those who share that viewpoint). In the process, more satisfactory notions of moral agency might arise. For this to happen, however, we would have to reject the unrealistic and implicit

requirements that all be on the same moral/religious/political page. Given our long-standing need for “unification,” however, it is highly unlikely that such an agenda could ever be successfully implemented in mainstream American psychology.³² It is much too messy.

For all this espousal of true diversity, the Arminian thesis has less irenical implications. I have argued, along with Edwards, that the Arminian impulse actually tends to undermine the very things it hopes to sustain (such as responsibility and moral inducement). One way that it undermines itself is by insisting that voluntary processes (insofar as they are morally significant) exist outside of the realm of causality to which all other earthly creatures and things are bound. This implies that a science of psychology is not able to study “free” voluntary processes. It implies that psychology cannot consider human beings as moral agents.

Philosopher Owen Flanagan (2002) has recently addressed the problems with the Arminian view of free will (although he prefers to speak of the Cartesian soul³³). Flanagan argues that “belief in free will is a central component of the dominant humanistic image in the West” (Flanagan, 2002, p. 111). This widespread notion of free will is identical to what I have been calling the “Arminian” notion of moral agency: “many people think they need a notion of free agency that involves a self-initiating ego in order to undergird the idea that they are free” (p. 112). Along with Edwards, Flanagan

³² On a superficial level, one might argue that the “divisions” of the APA are an instantiation of the diversity that I recommend. Although the divisions do allow for a diversity of interests, it is also true that the activities within each division are still morally nonsectarian. Division 36, which deals with the psychology of religion, affirms simply that: “the division is nonsectarian” (American Psychological Association, 2003, October 6).

³³ Owen Flanagan portrays the Cartesian soul in ways that sound very much like the “Arminian” notion of free will. This opens, I think, interesting historical questions about the relations between the two formulations.

takes the compatibilist position³⁴ that self-determination is *not* needed for moral agency. Further, along with Edwards, Flanagan shows the many incoherencies that inhere in the “Arminian” view of moral agency.³⁵ Unfortunately, along with Edwards, Flanagan also tends to caricaturize the Arminian will as an unconstrained, unmoved mover. Both Upham and James argued that free choices are always constrained by motives (Upham) or the object of choice (James).

Although I would agree with Flanagan’s assessment of the shortcomings of the Arminian will, this dissertation problematizes some of his most basic assumptions. Most importantly, Flanagan seems to argue that belief in a personal God constrains one to posit an Arminian, self-determined will (Flanagan, 2002, p. 107). Likewise, he assumes (along with James) that one must be a materialist to be able to embrace both universal causation and moral agency (i.e., to embrace compatibilism). Certainly our first two authors (Ames and Edwards) would not have agreed with these contentions. Their belief in a personal God did not corner them in to believing in a self-determined will. Their belief in universal causation did not lead them to abandon the idea that human beings are moral agents. So, for those who are suspicious of the moral adequacy of naturalism, there are historical alternatives to naturalistic compatibilism. Our ability to utilize such models, however, is necessarily constrained by the communities of discourse to which we belong.

³⁴ For reasons that are not relevant to this discussion, Flanagan prefers to call his position “*neo-compatibilism*” (p. 127).

³⁵ For example, Flanagan offers the following challenge to those who would embrace (what I am calling) an “Arminian” notion of moral agency: “Explain to me what it is you are doing when you engage in moral education. Why do you attempt to influence the young to learn what is right and good? ... If free will is a prime mover unmoved, why are you attempting to move it?” (Flanagan, 2002, p. 151). This argument very clearly echoes Edwards’ argument that God’s use of commands makes no sense given Arminian presuppositions, since the commands are meant to have a causal influence on the human will (III.7).

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